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CUPID AND PSYCHE AND OTHER TALES

CUPID AND PSYCHE AND OTHER TALES FROM THE GOLDEN ASS OF APULEIUS

NEWLY EDITED BY W.H.D.ROUSE LITT.D.

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". . . IN SPITE OF ALL,
SOME SHAPE OF BEAUTY MOVES AWAY THE PALL
FROM OUR DARK SPIRITS.
. . . . . .
ALL LOVELY TALES THAT WE HAVE HEARD OR READ;
AN ENDLESS FOUNTAIN OF IMMORTAL DRINK,
POURING UNTO US FROM THE HEAVEN'S BRINK."

Apuleius. - circa 225 -

PREFACE

Characteristics of the Age of Apuleius. —In thinking of the world under the early Roman empire, we are apt, not unnaturally, to turn our eyes to the central city, with its tyrannies and its cruelties, wallowing in sordid magnificence, as it is presented to us in the words of Tacitus or Juvenal. The effects of enormous irresponsible power centralized in one man, for good or for evil, are so striking, as almost to bedazzle our eyes, and to hold them from looking more keenly at the picture, or attempting to pass beyond the city walls. Knowing what was to come, we espy the seeds of decay in mind and morals; and it needs more than a common insight to realize that there was life and health in the national organism, that its ruin was not then inevitable, and that there was in the world a great deal of sincerity and kindliness. But at the

end of the first century the best of Rome lay in the provinces. As regards literature, the age was devoted to study: the old authors were admired and imitated because they were old, more even than when Horace exposed the fallacy of the principle. But this fault had its good side, and the spirit of learning could not have been all bad when it was possible for the treatise *On the Sublime* to be written. But there was very little creative literature, and the best of what there was came, not from Rome, but from the provinces.

The Author and his Life. — Into this pedants' paradise sails like a wild meteor Apuleius, in some respects the most remarkable literary figure of his time. The date of his birth is not known, but from the information which he gives in his works, it is inferred that he was born in the first quarter of the second century. He had ancestors who came from Attica, Corinth, and Sparta;[1] but his father was of African birth, having been the *duumvir* or chief official of Madaura.[2] "My country," he says, "lies on the confines of Numidia and Gaetulia; I am half Numidian and half

[1] *Met.* 1. [2] *Apol.* 24.

Gaetulian,[1] nothing to be ashamed of, any more than Cyrus was ashamed of being half Median and half Persian. The question is, not where one is born but what is one's character, not where we live but how we live. A vintner may praise his Thasian wine, or a greengrocer his Phliasian cabbages; but virtue and vice do not grow out of the soil." As a boy, he lived and studied in Carthage,[2] where he got his rudiments of philosophy. Afterwards, in Attica, he studied philosophy, poetry, geometry, music, and dialectic: "All these (he says) I courted, and the nine Muses besides, with more goodwill than success, no doubt."[3] His modest patrimony was partly exhausted in these studies, and in his widely extended travels.[4] Greek was thus familiar to him from his childhood; and in the course of his travels, he tells us, "I came a stranger to the Latian city, and there acquired the native speech with tribulationary toil (*aerumnabili labore*) and without the aid of a master."[5] In Rome he practised at the bar, and earned a considerable amount by this means.[6] The insatiable curiosity of his mind led him to investigate

[1] *Apol.* 24: Seminumidam et Semigaetulum.
[2] *Flor.* 86. [3] *Flor.* 97. [4] *Apol.* 23.
[5] *Met.* i. 1. [6] *Met.* xi. 28, 30.

all the religious rites and mysteries which he came across. He was initiated into many sacred rites in Greece, and carefully preserved certain memorials of initiation given him by the priests, which afterwards brought him trouble.[1] In particular he mentions Aesculapius, on whom he delivered a public lecture, recounting his religious experiences. He appears to have had some secret object of worship in his own house;[2] but though inclined towards mysticism, his intellect was too robust to be led away into those wild opium dreams which are described in the rhapsodies of Aelius Aristides. On a journey to Alexandria, Apuleius fell ill at Oea, and was entertained by friends;[3] and while there he was visited by a young man, Pontianus, whom he had met in Athens. Pudentilla, the lad's mother, had been left a widow fourteen years before, and was then living with her two sons; Pontianus pressed Apuleius to come and stay with them. He consented, and a friendship sprang up between him and the widow's family. Apuleius made a favourable impression upon the citizens of Oea, and he was asked whether he would not take up his abode there for good. Hereupon Pontianus proposed that he should marry his mother.

[1] *Apol.* 55. [2] *Apol.* 53. [3] *Apol.* 68, 71 *ff.*

Apuleius admitted the many virtues of Pudentilla, but drew back from the proposal because he was eager to be off on his travels again. In a short time, however, both he and the lady thought well of it, and the match was made. Unfortunately Pontianus died, and the younger son Pudens, having come under the influence of his uncle, and according to Apuleius having been corrupted by him and led into dissolute courses, finally made common cause with others of the family, and prosecuted Apuleius for sorcery, and the murder of Pontianus his stepson.

To judge from the defence, the charges brought against Apuleius were absurd. Some of them seem to have touched his personal appearance. He grew his hair long, said the accuser, by way of meretricious attraction;[1] possessed a mirror, and he a philosopher;[2] used toothpowder, and actually wrote a poem about it, which he sent to a friend along with the recipe and some Arabian herbs.[3] This poem was declared to contain some magical or obscene meaning, which Apuleius answers by quoting a few lines: —

> To cleanse your teeth, and scour your ruddy gums,
> At your request lo this tooth-cleaner comes,

[1] *Apol.* 4. [2] *Apol.* 13. [3] *Apol.* 6.

> Of Arab plants composed. This powder fine
> And whitening, will make the mouth to shine,
> The tiniest gumboil it will smooth away,
> Sweep up the relics of the passing day;
> That if you open out your lips to smile,
> Nothing may show therein that could defile.

There seems nothing in this poem that might bring a blush to the cheek of the young person; yet the accuser, says Apuleius, uttered the word "tooth-powder" with more righteous indignation than a man might say "poison."[1] "You need no such thing," he retorts, "if you only open your lips to speak calumny."[2] He is also accused of writing indecent amatory poems; he admits the poems, but denies the indecency, and defends himself by the example of Plato and of Hadrian. As for the charge of magic, it is based upon the most trivial things. Apuleius had collected strange fishes; had something wrapt in a cloth which he showed to no one; Pontianus had fallen down in his presence; Pudentilla had married him after thirteen years of widowhood. He answers that the fishes were collected for scientific investigation; and hints that if bewitchment there were in the marriage, it was more likely to be on the other side.[3]

[1] *Apol.* 7. [2] *Apol.* 8.

[3] *Apol.* 27: at enim maior natu iuvenem non est aspernata.

Enumerating the recognised paraphernalia of sorcery, he asks why none of these things had been found in his possession ; but even if fish were so used, must he who buys a dhow be a pirate ? Finally, after dealing in detail with other charges of the same sort, he adds pertinently: "All your accusations are questions : if you accuse, state your accusations ; to ask betrays ignorance.[1] Your argument is : Apuleius has something ; because I don't know what it is, I maintain it to be magical ; therefore believe what I say, because I say what I know not."[2] The real secret of the prosecution was jealousy of the lady's fortune ; and Apuleius gave proof of his disinterestedness by producing the marriage settlements and his wife's will, which left her property to her sons. He proves that he had nothing to gain by the marriage ; and that the uncle had actually himself advised her to marry before this coil arose. The speech is conclusive on every point ; and its good humour is no less remarkable than its logic. There is no doubt that he was acquitted, for he lived in Oea for some years afterwards, and made a great reputation in Africa as a lecturer. The date of his death is unknown. In succeeding ages he was credited

[1] *Apol.* 54. [2] *Apol.* 53.

with supernatural power, and passed for a miracle-monger, in which capacity he is several times mentioned by Augustine.

His Works.—The *Golden Ass* is believed to have been the earliest work of Apuleius. Besides this he wrote a large number of others: on history, zoology, husbandry, on music and arithmetic, a treatise on astronomy, and a translation of Plato's *Phaedo*, all which are now lost. There remain the Defence *De Magia*, from which we have freely quoted, as the chief authority for his life; pamphlets on the Daimon of Socrates and on Plato's philosophy; a translation of the Greek treatise *De Mundo*; *Florida*, a series of extracts from his works; and the *Metamorphoses*, which must now engage our attention.

Origin of the Transformed Ass.—A piece commonly printed among the works of Lucian, entitled Λούκιος ἢ Ὄνος, contains the substance of the story of Apuleius. Here may be read the incidents of the transformation in due order, without the interpolations. If this very piece be not the groundwork of the Latin story, there must have been another version practically identical; and for argument's sake we will suppose it to have been this. It is true,

there is nothing to prove that Apuleius had not before him an original containing the interpolations as well; but it is noteworthy that most of these are just of that kind which interested Apuleius, tales of magic and witchcraft, so that it was natural for him to interpolate these. It seems to be reasonable then to assume, that the author's part in this work was to add the interpolations, and to retell the narrative in picturesque language of his own.

Lucius and Apuleius compared.—In the Greek book, Lucius, like his namesake in the Latin, journeys to Thessaly, and there he is entertained by one Hipparchus; but Hipparchus treats his guest well, and the quaint incident of the fish-market, with its topsy-turvy justice, is not to be found there. Lucius being eager to learn something of the Thessalian witches, and hearing that his hostess is one of these, determines to get at her secrets by making love to Palaestra the serving-maid. Thus the love-episode, which in Apuleius has the air of natural attraction, is in the Greek premeditated, and becomes at once distasteful. Here Apuleius has the advantage: the episode is equally necessary to the plot, but it is more naturally introduced; and, moreover, its

treatment is more delicate and full of charm. Lucius gains his wish, and the transformation takes place in the same way as we read it here. Nor is there any material difference in the events which follow, until we come to the robbers' den. Then follows the capture of a bride, the ass's attempt to carry her off, and the discussion of their punishment; but there is nothing in the Greek to answer to the merry tale of the robber drest in a bearskin, and the episode of Cupid and Psyche is also absent. The rescue is brought about by an open attack on the robbers, in which they are worsted; but in Apuleius, the girl's bridegroom pretends to enlist in the band, and when he is accepted, he plies them with wine until they are all drunk, and then carries off both bride and ass. Lucius now goes through various adventures and perils, and is sold to a priest of Cybele, whose image Lucius is to carry on his back. The travelling mountebanks behave in the Greek story as in the Latin. When they want him no longer, they sell Lucius to a gardener, from whose hands he passes into those of a soldier, and then he becomes the property of a cook. Here Lucius, having no taste for asses' food, takes occasion to eat his master's viands on the sly, and being

discovered is shown as a marvel. Now is described how a woman, one of the sightseers, fell in love with him for all his ass's shape. Lucius is finally brought into the theatre to make a show, and finding a bunch of roses within his reach, eats it and is restored to human shape before the eyes of the multitude. The final episode is coarse, and much more offensive than anything in the Latin; and the same may be said of other parts of the two versions. There is much in both which offends a modern taste: but Apuleius is more natural than the Greek, and tells even his worst episodes without a depraved pruriency; the Greek shows Greece at her very worst.

It will be seen by a comparison of the whole text, that the Greek is little more than a bald outline of what Apuleius gives us. Where an episode is to be found in both, the Latin version is fuller, and enlivened by natural dramatic touches. There are besides a number of episodes in the Latin which are not in the Greek at all. Some have been already mentioned; besides these, many anecdotes and tales are introduced by the lips of one or other of the characters, or by the author himself, which partly have a bearing upon the plot, and are partly

folk-tales of hoary antiquity. There is, for example, the wife surprised in company with her lover, who hides him under a tub and pretends he has been cheapening it with a view to purchase. This is one of a world-wide class of tales dealing with the wiles of womankind. Another describes how a criminal was discovered by a wise man. All the gruesome witch-stories, the best of which are given below, are peculiar to the Latin version; and the magnificent description of the procession of Isis, and her mysteries, which brings the tale to an end, is new. Most of these episodes (except that of *Cupid and Psyche*, which is too long for just proportion) are fitted naturally into the story, and give the impression that the author conceived his work as a whole; the suggestion has been given by some piece like the Greek, but the author has made it his own as Shakespeare made North and Holinshed his own.

The comparison is apt; for there is the same difference between the Greek and the Latin as between Shakespeare and his authorities. The structure of the Greek book is good, but its execution so poor as barely to be worthy of a place in literature. Apuleius on the other hand is vivid with life. His witches make us shudder

with fear and loathing; his thieves and peasants are real men; his mountebanks convince both feeling and understanding. Scenes of ancient life pass before our view and vanish. We do not criticise, we observe: there is no doubt in our minds that even so these things were. And these scenes are unique. Even Plautus does not make the past live as Apuleius does. Compare, for example, the last scene of the *Captivi* with the few sentences describing the wretched slaves in the *Golden Ass:* the one is apprehended by the intellect, the other is felt—we feel even as though something ought really to be done for the poor creatures. The scenes of witchcraft and *diablerie* are so outrageously horrible and ridiculous that it seems as if no one could have invented them; these also are as convincing to the mind as veritable reports of witch-trials, which show what our forefathers did indubitably believe about them. Was ever the superstition of sympathetic magic so absurdly turned to account as in the fight of Lucius with the wineskins? Who could have thought of that bewitched sponge if the thing did not happen? The fact is, once we set foot in Thessaly, witchery is in the air: it gets into our brains as we read, and the wonders that follow

seem to be the most natural thing in the world. There is real genius in these stories, and they could not be better told. No less fine in a very different way is the last part of the book, which describes the mysteries of Isis. Lucius in the account of his visions shows that his soul is still human. We forget all about his bestial body, we are rapt with his exaltation, and feel the air grow pure and fresh as before the dawn. A real reverence breathes through his description of the goddess's worship, and his prayer of gratitude comes from a full heart. It must be that the author himself felt this; it seems almost as if the whole tale might be a religious allegory, how man born half-beast, half-divine, shakes off the ape and tiger, and comes to his inheritance amongst the gods. I would not press the analogy too far, but the oftener I read the book, the more does this aspect of it grow upon me. This is the true attitude of the ancient "mystic." Apuleius casts out his tale: for the unthinking, it contains entertainment and fun enough to satisfy; but for the thoughtful, the aspiring, the initiated, he has more, a message of hope and a prophecy of purification.

The characterisation of Lucius is a triumph. Throughout the book he has the air of an innocent

in the toils; we sympathize with him throughout his misfortunes, hold our breath at his narrow escapes, and when at last he is saved, we feel that he must live happily ever after. He is no saint, but he is a very human and lovable sinner, and we cannot find it in our hearts to think hardly of him. Amidst an atmosphere of witchery, sorcery, devilry and mystery he keeps a cheerful heart, never dismayed, insatiable in curiosity, full of life and hope.

The Present Text.—Adlington's translation was first published in 1566, and reprinted in 1571, 1582, 1596, 1600, and 1639. The present issue is based on the first edition (1566); a reprint of the 1639 edition was included in the *Tudor Classics;* Mr. Andrew Lang's *Cupid and Psyche* (Nutt, 1887) was taken from that of 1596. The first edition has not been used before, so far as I can discover, and it is superior in accuracy, that of 1639 (if correctly reproduced) making nonsense in one place at least by the omission of several lines. It is intended to republish the first edition shortly in an accurate transcript.

The Tale of Cupid and Psyche is here given without omissions; but in the other extracts

any coarseness which might offend modern readers has been omitted, and the text has been somewhat shortened for convenience. The spelling has been modernized, and the proper names corrected according to the Latin text.

Cupid and Psyche.—The legend of Cupid and Psyche has been the subject of a learned work by Rohde, called *Psyche;* it has been examined by W. A. Clouston in his *Popular Tales and Fictions* (i. 205), and in a lighter vein by A. Lang in *Custom and Myth*, and in his preface to the reprint of Adlington's version. It would be out of place to deal with the matter at any length here; but the salient points may be indicated. Whilst the tale as a whole is essentially Greek in its delicacy and charm, nor can a like sequence of incidents be found elsewhere, it has been compounded of elements which are of great antiquity and often bear the stamp of a primitive age. Chief amongst these are: (1) the mysterious husband; (2) the forbidden privilege; (3) the impossible tasks; and (4) the helpful beasts.

(1) The most familiar type of the Mysterious Husband appears in the tale of *Beauty and the Beast*, in which a maiden is wedded to a serpent or some

horrible monster, who afterwards proves to be a prince bewitched. It is clear from the hints and suggestions of Psyche's sisters that the legend may originally have contained this element, or at least that it was known to those who told the tale. But in the Greek story, Cupid's concealment is assigned to a more natural cause—a desire to hide his love from Aphrodite, his offended mother.

(2) In many of the tales of this type, the bride is forbidden to see her husband, or to ask his name; sometimes when the bride is one of a superior race, such as a fairy, the husband is not to see her at certain seasons, or unclad, or to mention a particular word or name in her presence, or to speak words of reproach to her. The incident of the burning lamp is almost exactly reproduced in *East of the Sun and West of the Moon*, where the husband is a White Bear by day, and only resumes his true shape at night. These incidents are really part of a larger subject, which includes prohibitions of all sorts, particularly (as in *Bluebeard*) the Forbidden Room; and they seem to embody to some extent a test of obedience and a moral lesson. Strange enough they may seem to the reader, yet there is no doubt that they represent social customs which once existed. The classical

student will remember how the Spartan bridegroom for some time was not allowed to visit his wife except by stealth. Indeed such customs do still exist amongst savages, who often impose the strictest etiquette upon new-married couples. In some parts of Africa, a bridegroom often is not allowed to see his bride at all, or not during the day; and similar restrictions are known for India, America, and other parts of the world.

(3) Impossible tasks are part of the stock-in-trade of the folk-tale. From Heracles and Jason to Tom Tit Tot, we find these tests of endurance or ingenuity the never-failing delight of generation after generation of children. Each of the tasks set to Psyche might be made the subject of an interesting investigation; it will suffice now to call attention to the warning not to eat in hell, which meets us in the myth of Demeter.

(4) The beasts which help Psyche to perform her tasks are equally familiar from our Western nursery tales. They are especially frequent in India, and have been by some scholars attributed to Buddhist influence; but the theory will not hold, for they are both older than Buddhism and reach beyond its possible influence. This type of incident belongs to a time when the animal world was felt to be

closely connected with mankind. Each understands the speech of the other, and they show mutual kindness and good-fellowship. We are in a world where all nature is linked together as a whole, and it is quite the natural thing for men, beasts, and trees to be friends together. It is a very pleasing picture; a world where, in spite of much that is ugly, some of the fairest illusions of childhood seem to last all through life.

I forbear to speak of the minor elements of the tale, such as the jealous sisters familiar to us in the story of *Cinderella*, and the cruel stepmother or task-master who sets the tasks. No one can have read or heard popular tales without meeting with these. But enough has been said to indicate the general lines of analysis which are useful in examining the tale. It is in the combination that the artist shows his power; and of all the tales of the world, it is hardly too much to say that this tale of Cupid and Psyche is the most beautiful and charming.

TALES FROM THE GOLDEN ASS

Adlington translation.

First ed. 1566.

THE GOLDEN ASS

Lucius, on his way to Thessaly, fell in with a couple of wayfarers talking together in much excitement. Aristomenes it seems, with his friend Socrates, had spent the night in a hostelry kept by the witch, Meroe. Night came, he closed and barred the door, and put his bed against it, and laid down to rest.

BUT I could in no wise sleep, for the great fear which was in my heart, until it was about midnight, and then I began to slumber. But, alas! behold suddenly the chamber doors brake open, and locks, bolts, and posts fell down, that you would verily have thought that some thieves had presently come to have spoiled and robbed us. And my bed whereon I lay, being a truckle-bed, fashioned in the form of a cradle, and one of the feet broken and rotten, by violence was turned upside down, and I likewise was overwhelmed and covered lying in the same. And while I lay on the

ground covered in this sort, I peeped under the bed to see what would happen. And behold there entered in two old women, the one bearing a burning torch, and the other a sponge and a naked sword; and so in this habit they stood about, Socrates being fast asleep. Then she which bare the sword said unto the other, "Behold, sister Panthia, this is my dear and sweet heart, this is he who little regarding my love, doth not only defame me with reproachful words, but also intendeth to run away." Which said, she pointed toward me that lay under the bed, and shewed me to Panthia. "This is he," quoth she, "which is his counsellor, and persuadeth him to forsake me, and now being at the point of death, he lieth prostrate on the ground covered with his bed, and hath seen all our doings, and hopeth to escape scot-free from my hands; but I will cause that he shall repent himself too late, nay rather forthwith, of his former intemperate language, and his present curiosity." Which words when I heard, I fell into a cold sweat, and my heart trembled with fear, insomuch that the bed over me did likewise rattle and shake. Then spake Panthia unto Meroe and said, "Sister, let us by and by tear him in pieces." Then Meroe answered,

"Nay, rather let him live, and bury the corpse of this poor wretch in some hole of the earth"; and therewithal she turned up the head of Socrates on the other side, and thrust her sword up to the hilt into the left part of his neck, and received the blood that gushed out, into a pot, that no drop thereof fell beside: which things I saw with mine own eyes; and as I think to the intent that she might alter nothing that pertained to sacrifice, which she accustomed to make, she thrust her hand down into the internals of his body, and searching about at length brought forth the heart of my miserable companion, Socrates, who having his throat cut in such sort, yielded out a dreadful cry and gave up the ghost. Then Panthia stopt the wide wound of his throat with the sponge, and said, "O sponge, sprung and made of the sea, beware that thou pass not by running river." When this was ended, they went their ways, and the doors closed fast, the posts stood in their old places, and the locks and bolts were shut again. But I that lay upon the ground like one without soul, naked and cold, like to one that were more than half dead, yet reviving myself, and appointed as I thought for the gallows, began to say, "Alas! what shall become of me to-morrow,

when my companion shall be found murthered here in the chamber? To whom shall I seem to tell any similitude of truth, whenas I shall tell the truth indeed? They will say, 'If thou wert unable to resist the violence of the women, yet shouldst thou have cried for help: wouldst thou suffer the man to be slain before thy face and say nothing? Or why did they not slay thee likewise? why did they spare thee that stood by and saw them commit that horrible fact? Wherefore although thou hast escaped their hands, yet thou shalt not escape ours.'" While I pondered these things with myself the night passed on, and so I resolved to take my horse before day, and go forward on my journey.

Howbeit the ways were unknown to me: and thereupon I took up my packet, unlocked and unbarred the doors, but those good and faithful doors which in the night did open of their own accord, could then scantly be opened with their keys. And when I was out I cried, "O sirrah hostler, where art thou? Open the stable-door, for I will ride away by and by." The hostler lying behind the stable-door upon a pallet and half asleep, "What (quoth he), do you not know that the ways be very dangerous? what mean you to rise at this time

of night? If you, perhaps guilty of some heinous crime, be weary of your life, yet think you not that we are such sots that we will die for you." Then said I, "It is well-nigh day, and moreover, what can thieves take from him that hath nothing? Dost thou not know, fool as thou art, if thou be naked, if ten giants should assail thee, they could not spoil or rob thee?" Whereunto the drowsy hostler, half asleep and turning on the other side, answered, "What know I whether you have murthered your companion whom you brought in yesternight or no, and now seek the means to escape away?" O Lord, at that time, I remember, the earth seemed to open, and methought I saw at hellgate the dog Cerberus ready to devour me; and then I verily believed that Meroe did not spare my throat moved with pity, but rather cruelly pardoned me to bring me to the gallows. Wherefore I returned to my chamber, and there devised with myself in what sort I should finish my life. And therewithall I pulled out a piece of rope wherewith the bed was corded, and tied one end thereof about a rafter by the window, and with the other end I made a sliding knot, and stood upon my bed, and so put my neck into it, and when I leaped from the bed think-

ing verily to strangle myself and so die, behold the rope being old and rotten burst in the middle, and I fell down tumbling upon Socrates that lay under: and even at that same very time the hostler came in crying with a loud voice and said, "Where are you that made such haste at midnight, and now lies wallowing abed?" Whereupon (I know not whether it was by my fall, or by the great cry of the hostler) Socrates as waking out of a sleep, did rise up first and said, "It is not without cause that strangers do speak evil of all such hostlers, for this caitiff in his coming in, and with his crying out, I think under a colour to steal away something, has waked me out of a sound sleep." Then I rose up, joyful with a merry countenance, saying, "Behold, good hostler, my friend, my companion and my brother, whom thou didst falsely affirm to be slain by me this night. And therewithall I embraced my friend Socrates and kissed him, and took him by the hand and said, "Why tarry we? Why lose we the pleasure of this fair morning? let us go": and so I took up my packet, and paid the charges of the house and departed.

And we had not gone a mile out of the town but it was broad day, and then I diligently looked upon Socrates' throat to see if I could espy

the place where Meroe thrust in her sword; but when I could not perceive any such thing, I thought with myself, What a madman am I, that being overcome with wine yesternight have dreamed such terrible things! behold, I see Socrates is sound, safe and in health. Where is his wound? where is the sponge? where is his great and new cut? And then I spake to him and said, "Verily it is not without occasion that physicians of experience do affirm, that such as fill their gorges abundantly with meat and drink shall dream of dire and horrible sights: for I myself, not tempering my appetite yesternight from pots of wine, did seem to see this night strange and cruel visions, that even yet I think myself sprinkled and wet with human blood." Whereunto Socrates laughing made answer, "Nay verily, I myself dreamed this night that my throat was cut, and that I felt the pain of the wound, and that my heart was pulled out of my belly, and the remembrance thereof makes me now to fear, for my knees do so tremble that I can scarce go any further; and therefore I would fain eat somewhat to strengthen and revive my spirits." Then said I, "Behold here thy breakfast"; and therewithall I opened my scrip that hanged upon my shoulder, and

gave him bread and cheese, and we sat down under a great plane tree, and I ate part with him. And while I beheld him eating greedily, I perceived that he waxed meagre and pale, and that his lively colour faded away, insomuch that being in great fear, and remembering those terrible furies of whom I lately dreamed, the first morsel of bread that I put in my mouth (which was but very small) did so stick in my jaws, that I could neither swallow it down, nor yet yield it up, and moreover the small time of our being together increased my fear: and what is he that seeing his companion die in the highway before his face, would not greatly lament and be sorry? But when that Socrates had eaten sufficiently, he waxed very thirsty, for indeed he had well-nigh devoured all a whole cheese: and behold evil fortune! there was behind the plane tree a pleasant running water as clear as crystal, and I said unto him, "Come hither, Socrates, to this water and drink thy fill." And then he rose and came to the river, and kneeled down upon the side of the bank to drink; but he had scarce touched the water with his lips, whenas behold the wound of his throat opened wide, and the sponge suddenly fell into the water, and after issued out a little remnant of blood,

and his body being then without life, had fallen into the river, had I not caught him by the leg and so pulled him up. And after that I had lamented a good space the death of my wretched companion, I buried him in the sands there by the river.

When Lucius parted from the strangers, he felt some apprehension as to what manner of world he had got into; and in this mood proceeded to Hypata, the capital town of Thessaly, where he presented his letter of introduction to one Milo, and was received into his house. There he found a hospitable welcome to bare walls, and an empty larder; and feeling a desire for something more substantial, he went out to the market and bought some fish. On the way home he suddenly fell in with a friend, Pytheas, Clerk of the Market; who, on learning the price of the fish which Lucius had in his basket, in high indignation led him back to the seller, whom he rated soundly for cheating, and expressed his displeasure by making his men tread Lucius's fish in the dust. The credit of Thessaly having been thus saved, poor Lucius returned home without fish or money. Lucius begins now to feel that he must be in dreamland. Next day in the street Lucius was greeted by an unknown woman as her cousin, who took him home to a most delightful house, and warned him against Milo's wife, Pamphile, as a witch. Lucius thereupon determined to learn witchcraft from her, and returned to the house, where a pretty flirtation takes place between him and Fotis, most charming of handmaidens. On his next visit to his cousin Byrrhena, he is regaled at table with a strange tale related by one Bellerophon, a fellow-guest at Byrrhena's house.

When I was a young man I went into a

certain city called Miletus, to see the games and triumphs there called Olympia; and being desirous to come into this famous province, and after I had travelled over all Thessaly, I fortuned in an evil hour to come to the city Larissa, where (while I went up and down to view the streets, to take some relief for my poor estate, for I had spent all my money) I espied a tall old man standing upon a stone, in the midst of the market-place, crying with a loud voice and saying: That if any man would watch a dead corpse that night, he should be reasonably rewarded for his pains. Which when I heard, I said to one that passed by: "What is here to do? Do dead men use to run away in this country?" Then answered he: "Hold your peace, for you are but a babe and a stranger, and not without cause you are ignorant how you are in Thessaly, where the women witches do bite off by morcels the flesh of the faces of dead men, and thereby work their sorceries and enchantments." "Then (quoth I) in good fellowship tell me the order of this custody and how it is." "Marry (quoth he) first you must watch all the night, with your eyes bent continually upon the corpse, never looking off nor moving aside. For these witches do turn themselves

into sundry kinds of beasts, whereby they deceive the eyes of all men : sometimes they are transformed into birds, sometimes into dogs, and mice, and sometimes into flies. Moreover they will charm the keepers of the corpse asleep, neither can it be declared what means and shifts these wicked women do use to bring their purpose to pass. And the reward for such dangerous watching is no more than four or five shillings. But hearken further, which I had well-nigh forgotten : if the keeper of the dead body do not render (on the morning following) the corpse whole and sound as he received the same, he shall be punished in this sort, that is, if the corpse be diminished or spoiled in any part of his face, hands, or toes, the same shall be diminished or spoiled in the keeper." Which when I heard I took a good heart, and went unto the crier, and bid him cease, for I would take the matter in hand, and so I demanded what I should have. "Marry (quoth he) a thousand pence ; but beware, I say, young man, that you do well defend the dead corpse from the wicked witches, for he was the son of one of the chiefest of the city." "Tush (said I) you speak you cannot tell what. Behold, I am a man made all of iron, and have never desire to sleep, and am more quick of

sight than Lynx or Argus." I had scarce spoken these words when he took me by the hand, and brought me to a certain house, the gate whereof was closed fast, so that I went through the wicket, then he brought me into a chamber somewhat dark, and showed me a matron clothed in mourning vesture and weeping in lamentable wise: and he spake unto her and said, "Behold, here is one that will enterprise to watch the corpse of your husband this night." Which when she heard she turned her blubbered face covered with her hair unto me, saying: "I pray you, young man, take good heed and see well to your office." "Have no care (quoth I) so that you will give me anything above that which is due to be given," wherewith she was contented. And then she rose, and brought me into a chamber whereas the corpse lay covered with white sheets, and she called seven witnesses, before whom she showed the dead body, and every part and parcel thereof, and (with weeping eyes) desired them all to testify the matter; which done she said these words of course as follows: "Behold, his nose is whole, his eyes safe, his ears without scar, his lips untouched, and his chin sound." All which was written and noted in tables and subscribed with the

hands of the witnesses to confirm the same. Which done, I said unto the matron, "Madam, I pray you that I may have all things here necessary." "What is that (quoth she)?" "Marry," said I, "a great lamp replenished with oil, pots of wine, and water to delay the same, and some other drink and dainty dish that was left at supper." Then she shaked her head, and said: "Away, fool as thou art: thinkest thou to play the glutton here, and to look for dainty meats, where so long has not been seen any smoke at all? comest thou hither to eat, where we should weep and lament?" and therewithal she turned back and commanded her maiden Myrrhena to deliver me a lamp with oil, which when she had done they closed the chamber door and departed.

Now when I was alone I rubbed mine eyes, and armed myself to keep the corpse; and to the intent I would not sleep, I began to sing, and so I passed the time till it was midnight: whenas, behold, there crept in a weasel into the chamber, and she came against me and put me in very great fear, in so much that I marvelled greatly at the audacity of so little a beast. To whom I said, "Get thee hence, and hie thee to thy fellows, lest thou feel my fingers! Why wilt not thou go?" Then incontinently she

ran away, and when she was gone, I fell on the ground so fast asleep that Apollo himself could not discern whether of us two was the dead corpse, for I lay prostrate, as one without life, and needed a keeper likewise. At length the cocks began to crow declaring that it was day, wherewithal I waked and (being greatly afeared) ran unto the dead body with the lamp in my hand, and I viewed him round about. And immediately came in the matron weeping with her witnesses, and ran unto the corpse and eftsoons kissing him, turned his body and found no part diminished. Then she commanded one Philodespotus, her steward, to pay me my wages forthwith, which when he had done, he said, "We thank you, gentle young man, for your pains, and verily for your diligence herein we will account you as one of the family."

Whereunto I (being joyous of my unhoped gain, and rattling my money in my hand) did answer; "I pray you, Madam, esteem me as one of your servitors, and if you need my services at any time I am at your commandment." I had not fully declared these words, whenas behold all the servants of the house were assembled with weapons to drive me away one buffeted me about t[illegible] ther about th

shoulders, some struck me in the sides, some kicked me, and some tore my garments, and so I was handled amongst them and driven from the house (as the proud young man Adonis who was torn by a boar). And when I was come into the next street, I mused with myself and remembered mine unwise and unadvised words which I had spoken, whereby I considered that I had deserved much more punishment, and that I was worthily beaten for my folly. And by and by the corpse came forth, which (because it was the body of one of the chief of the city) was carried in funeral pomp round about the market-place, according to the rite of the country there. And forthwith stepped out an old man weeping and lamenting, and ran unto the bier and embraced it, and with deep sighs and sobs cried out in this sort: "O masters, I pray you by the faith which you profess, and by the duty which you owe unto the weal public, take pity and mercy upon this dead corpse, who is miserably murdered, and do vengeance on this wicked and cursed woman his wife, which hath committed this fact. For it is she and no other, that hath poisoned her husband, my sister's son, to the intent to get his heritage." In this sort the old man complained before the

face of all the people. Then they (astonished at these sayings and because they seemed to be true) cried out, "Burn her, burn her," and they sought for stones to throw at her, and willed the boys in the street to do the same; but she (weeping in lamentable wise) did swear by all the gods that she was not culpable of this crime. "No" (quoth the old man). "Behold, here is one sent by the providence of God to try out the matter, even Zathlas an Egyptian, who is the most principal prophecier in all this country, and who was hired of me for money to reduce the soul of this man from hell, and to receive his body for the trial hereof." And therewithal he brought forth a certain young man clothed in linen raiment, having on his feet a pair of pantofles, and his crown shaven, who kissed his hands and knees, saying: "O Priest, have mercy, have mercy, I pray thee, by the celestial planets: by the powers infernal, by the virtue of the natural elements, by the silences of the night, by the buildings of swallows nigh unto the town of Coptos, by the increase of the flood Nilus, by the secret mysteries of Memphis, and by the instruments and trumpets of the Isle Pharos, have mercy, I say; and call again to life this dead body, and make that

his eyes, which be closed and shut, may be opened and see. Howbeit we mean not to strive against the law of death, neither intend we to deprive the earth of his right, but (to the end this fact may be known) we crave but a small time and space of life." Whereat this prophet was moved, and took a certain herb, and laid it three times upon the mouth of the dead, and he took another and laid it upon his breast in this sort. Thus when he had done he turned himself into the east and made certain orisons to the sun, which caused all the people to marvel greatly, and to look for this strange miracle that should happen. Then I pressed in amongst them nigh unto the bier, and got upon a stone to see this mystery. And behold incontinently the dead body began to receive spirit, his principal veins did move, his life came again and he held up his head, and spake in this sort: "Why do you call me back again to this transitory life, that have already tasted of the water of Lethe, and likewise been in the deadly den of Styx? Leave off, I pray, leave off and let me lie in quiet rest." When these words were uttered by the dead corpse, the prophet drew nigh unto the bier, and said, "I charge thee to tell (before the face of all the people here) the occasion of thy death;

what, dost thou think that I cannot by my conjurations call up the dead? and by my puissance torment thy body?" Then the corpse moved up his head again, and made reverence unto the people, and said, "Verily I was poisoned by the means of my wicked wife, and so thereby yielded my bed unto an adulterer." Whereat his wife, taking present audacity, and reproving his sayings with a cursed mind, did deny it: the people were bent against her sundry ways; some thought best that she should be buried alive with her husband, but some said that there ought to be no credit given unto the dead body. Which opinion was clean taken away by the words that the corpse spake again, and said, "Behold, I will give you some evident token, which never yet any other man knew, whereby you shall perceive that I declare the truth," and by and by he pointed towards me that stood on the stone, and said: "When this, the good guardian of my body, watched me diligently in the night, and that the wicked witches and enchantresses came into the chamber to spoil me of my limbs, and to bring such their purpose to pass, did transform themselves into the shape of beasts; and whenas they could in no [redacted] deceive or beguile his vigilant eyes, they [redacted] dead and

sound a sleep that by their witchcraft he seemed without spirit or life. After this they called me by my name, and did never cease till as the cold members of my body began by little and little to revive. Then he (being of more lively soul, howbeit buried in sleep, in that he and I were named by one name, and because he knew not that they called me) rose up first, and as one without sense or perseverance passed by the door fast closed unto a certain hole, whereas the witches cut off first his nose and then his ears, and so that was done to him which was appointed to be done to me. And that such their subtilty might not be perceived, they made him a like pair of ears and nose of ware, wherefore you may see that the poor miser, for lucre of a little money, sustained loss of his members." Which when he had said I was greatly astonished, and (minding to prove whether his words were true or no) put my hand to my nose, and my nose fell off, and put my hand to mine ears, and mine ears fell off. Whereat all the people wondered greatly, and laughed me to scorn : but I (being stricken in a cold sweat) crept between their legs for shame and escaped away. So I disfigured returned home again, and covered the loss of my ears with my long hair, and glued this

clout to my face to hide my shame." As soon as Bellerophon had told his tale, they which sat at the table (replenished with wine) laughed heartily. And while they drank one to another, Byrrhena spake to me, and said: "From the first foundation of this city, we have had a custom to celebrate the festival day of the god Risus, and to-morrow is the feast, whenas I pray you to be present to set out the same more honourably, and I would with all my heart that you could find or devise somewhat of yourself, that might be in honour of so great a god." To whom I answered: "Verily, cousin, I will do as you command me, and right glad would I be if I might invent any laughing or merry matter to please or satisfy Risus withall." Then I rose from the table, and took leave of Byrrhena and departed, and when I came into the first street my torch went out, and with great pain I could scarce get home by reason it was so dark, and for fear of stumbling. And when I was well nigh come unto the door, behold I saw three men of great stature heaving and lifting at Milo's gates to get in. And when they saw me they were nothing afraid, but assayed with more force to break down the doors, whereby they gave me occasion (and not without cause) to think they were

strong thieves. Whereupon I by and by drew out my sword, which I carried for that purpose under my cloak, and ran in amongst them, and wounded them in such sort that they fell down dead before my face. Thus when I had slain them all, I knocked sweating and breathing at the door, till Fotis let me in. And then full weary with the slaughter of these thieves, like Hercules when he fought against the king Geryon, I went to my chamber and laid me down to sleep.

Next morning Lucius was in much distress for the death of the robbers he had slain; and with reason, for two sergeants soon appeared and led him to trial; when he marvelled to see that as he went among so many thousands of people there was not one but laughed exceedingly. Accused by one old man in a long speech, he defended himself by telling the truth, and protesting his innocence; and when he had done he perceived that all the people laughed exceedingly, and especially his friend and host Milo. Upon this, in came two women, the bereaved wives, howling and lamenting, and demanding torture, with the dead bodies lying upon a bier. The rack and wheel were brought in, and Lucius was desired before execution to uncover the bodies of the slain, which he refused a good space, but at last uncovered their bodies:

But, O good Lord (he says), what a strange sight did I see! what a monster! what sudden change of all my sorrows! I seemed as though I were one of

the house of Proserpina and of the family of death, insomuch that I could not sufficiently express the form of this new sight, so far was I amazed and astonied thereat: for why, the bodies of the three slain men were no bodies, but three blown bladders mangled in divers places, and they seemed to be wounded in those parts where I remembered I wounded the thieves the night before. Whereat the people laughed exceedingly: some rejoiced marvellously at the remembrance thereof, some held their stomachs that ached with joy, but every man, delighted at this passing sport, so pressed out of the theatre. But I from the time that I uncovered the bodies, stood still, as cold as ice, no otherwise than as the other statues and images there, neither came I into my right senses, until such time as Milo my host came and took me by the hand, and with civil violence led me away weeping and sobbing, whether I would or no. And because that I might be seen, he brought me by many blind ways and lanes to his house, where he went about to comfort me, being sad and yet fearful, with gentle entreaty of talk. But he could in no wise mitigate my impatiency of the injury which I conceived within my mind. And behold, by and by the [illegible] Judges with

their ensigns entered into the house, and endeavoured to pacify me in this sort, saying: "O Lucius, we are advertised of your dignity, and know the genealogy of your ancient lineage, for the nobility of your kin do possess the greatest part of all this province: and think not that you have suffered the thing wherefore you weep, to any your reproach and ignominy, but put away all care and sorrow out of your mind. For this day, which we celebrate once a year in honour of the god Laughter, is always renowned with some solemn novelty, and the god doth continually accompany with the inventor thereof, and will not suffer that he be sorrowful, but pleasantly bear a joyful face. And verily all the city, for the grace that is in you, intend to reward you with great honours, and to make you a patron. And further, that your statue or image may be set up for a perpetual remembrance."

This honour Lucius declined, and bade them farewell. But in the evening the mystery was made plain; for Fotis presented herself before him with a whip, begging him to scourge her as a punishment, inasmuch as she was the cause of his misfortune. Her mistress (it seems) had cast her eyes upon a young Boeotian, whom she desired to attract to the house; and seeing him at the barber's a-polling, she secretly commanded Fotis to gather some of the hairs of his head which lay dispersed upon the ground, and to bring it home. But the barber scared her:

"Wherefore (says Fotis) I intended to run away; but because I would not seem to come to my mistress' sight with empty hands, I saw a man shearing of blown goat-skins, and the hair which he had shaven off was yellow, and much resembled the hair of the Bœotian, and I took a good deal thereof, and hiding the matter, brought it to my mistress. And so when night came, before your return from supper, she, to bring her purpose to pass, went up to a high gallery of her house, opening to the east part of the world, and preparing herself according to her accustomed practice, she gathered together all substance for fumigations, she brought forth plates of metal carved with strange characters, she prepared the bones of such as were drowned by tempest in the seas, she made ready the members of dead men, as the nostrils and fingers, she set out the lumps of flesh of such as were hanged, the blood which she had reserved of such as were slain, and the jawbones and teeth of wild beasts; then she said certain charms over the hair, and dipt it in divers waters, as in well-water, cow-milk, mountain honey, and other liquor. Which when she had done, she lapped it up together, and with many perfumes and smells threw it into an hot fire to

burn. Then by the great force of this sorcery, and the violence of so many confections, those bodies whose hair was burning in the fire received human shape, and felt, heard, and walked: and smelling the scent of their own hair, came and rapped at our doors. Then you being well tippled, and deceived by the obscurity of the night, draw out your sword courageously, like furious Ajax, and killed, not as he did, whole herd of beasts, but three blown skins."

Lucius forgave her, on condition that she should further gratify his curiosity, and show him the witch's charms. Accordingly Fotis came running to him one day, and told him that her mistress was about to transform herself into a bird; and at midnight she conducted him where he could see her do it. The witch rubbed herself all over with ointment, and shook her body, when Lucius perceived a plume of feathers to burgeon out, her nose waxed crooked and hard, her nails turned into claws, and so she became an owl. Then she cried and screeched like a bird of that kind, and flew away. Now nothing would serve but Lucius must do the same. The ointment was produced, and he thus proceeds:

After that I had well rubbed every part and member of my body, I hovered with my arms, and moved myself, looking still when I should be turned into a bird as Pamphila was; and behold, neither feathers nor the appearance of feathers did burgeon out, but verily my hair did turn in ruggedness, and

my tender skin waxed tough and hard, my fingers and toes losing the number of five turned into hooves, and out grew a great tail; now my face became monstrous, my nostrils wide, my lips hanging down, and mine ears rugged with hair: neither could I see any comfort of my transformation, for my members increased likewise, and so without all help, viewing every part of my poor body, I perceived that I was no bird, but a plain Ass.

Then I thought to blame Fotis, but being deprived as well of language as of human shape, I looked upon her with my hanging lips and watery eyes. Who as soon as she espied me in such sort, cried out, "Alas, poor wretch that I am, I am utterly cast away. The fear I was in and my haste hath beguiled me, but especially the mistaking of the box hath deceived me. But it forceth not much, in regard a sooner medicine may be gotten for this than for any thing; for if thou couldst get a rose and eat it, thou shouldst be delivered from the shape of an ass, and become my Lucius again. And would God I had gathered some garlands this evening past, according to my custom, then thou shouldst not continue an ass one night's space, but in the morning I will seek some rem- -ine

head, and dissembling mine ire, and taking my adversity in good part, I went into the stable to my own horse, where I found another ass; and I did verily think that mine own horse would take pity upon me, and proffer me lodging for that night: but it chanced far otherwise. For see, my horse and the ass as it were consented together to work my harm, and fearing lest I should eat up their provender, would in no wise suffer me to come nigh the manger, but kicked me with their heels from their meat, which I myself gave them the night before.

Then I, being thus handled by them and driven away, got me into a corner of the stable, where (while I remembered their uncourtesy, and how on the morrow I should return to Lucius by the help of a rose, whenas I thought to revenge myself of mine own horse) I fortuned to espy in the middle of a pillar sustaining the rafters of the stable, the image of the goddess Epona which was garnished and decked round about with fair fresh roses: then in hope of present remedy I leaped up with my fore feet as high as I could and stretching out my neck, and with my lips coveted to snatch some roses. But in an evil hour did I go about that enterprise, for behold the boy to whom I gave charge of my

horse came presently in, and finding me climbing upon the pillar, ran fretting towards me, and said: "How long shall we suffer this vile ass, that doth not only eat up his fellow's meat but also would spoil the images of the gods? why do I not kill this lame thief and weak wretch?" and therewithal looking about for some cudgel he espied where lay a faggot of wood, and choosing out a crabbed truncheon of the biggest he could find, did never cease beating of me, poor wretch, until such time as by great noise and rumbling he heard the doors of the house burst open, and the neighbours crying in lamentable sort, which enforced him (being stricken in fear) to fly his way. And by and by a troop of thieves entered in, and kept every part and corner of the house with weapons. And as men resorted to aid and help them which were within the doors, the thieves resisted and kept them back, for every man was armed with his sword and target in his hand, the glimpses whereof did yield out such light as if it had been day. Then they brake open a great chest with double locks and bolts, wherein was all the treasure of Milo, and ransacked the same, which when they had done they packed it up and gave every one a portion to carry. Ru[redacted]

had more than they could bear away, yet were they loth to leave any behind, but came into the stable and took us two poor asses and my horse, and laded us with greater trusses than we were able to bear. And when we were out of the house, they followed us with great staves, and willed one of their fellows to stay behind and bring them tidings what was done concerning the robbery; and so they beat us forward over great hills out of the high way.

But I with my heavy burden and my long journey did nothing differ from a dead ass, wherefore I determined with myself to seek some civil remedy, and by invocation of the name of the Prince of the country, to be delivered from so many miseries. And on a time as I passed through a great fair, I came amongst a multitude of Greeks, and I thought to call upon the renowned name of the Emperor, and to say, "O Caesar," and I cried out aloud, "O," but Caesar I could in no wise pronounce; the thieves little regarding my crying did lay me on, and beat my wretched skin in such sort that it was neither apt nor meet to make sives or sarces. Howbeit at last Jupiter ministered unto me an unhoped remedy. For when we had passed through many towns and villages, I fortuned to espy a pleasant

garden, wherein, besides many other flowers of delectable hue, were new and fresh roses, and (being very joyfull and desirous to catch some as I passed by) I drew nearer and nearer; and while my lips watered upon them, I thought of a better advice more profitable for me, lest if from an ass I should become a man, I might fall into the hands of the thieves, and either by suspicion that I were some witch, or for fear that I would utter their theft, I should be slain, wherefore I abstained for that time from eating of roses. And (enduring my present adversity) I eat hay as other asses did.

The rest of the story gives the adventures of the poor transformed ass, from which it will appear that it is none so easy a thing for an ass to find a rose to eat. He is ever on the brink of freedom, and ever driven away at the last moment. A lively picture is given of the thieves' den, and their conversation. One of their feats was to carry off a gentlewoman, who wept and would not be comforted, although the old hag who kept house for the thieves did her best to console her, amongst other things telling her the most pleasant and delectable tale of Cupid and Psyche, which here follows.

THE MOST PLEASANT AND DELECTABLE TALE OF THE MARRIAGE OF CUPID AND PSYCHE

THERE was sometimes a certain King, inhabiting in the west parts, who had to wife a noble Dame, by whom he had three daughters exceeding fair: of whom the two elder were of such comely shape and beauty, as they did excel and pass all other women living; whereby they were thought, worthily, to deserve the praise and commendation of every person, and deservedly to be preferred above the residue of the common sort: yet the singular passing beauty and maidenly majesty of the youngest daughter, did so far surmount and excel them two, as no earthly creature could by any means sufficiently express or set out the same. By reason whereof, after the fame of this excellent maiden was spread abroad in every part of the city, the

citizens and strangers there, being inwardly pricked by zealous affection to behold her famous person, came daily by thousands, hundreds, and scores, to her father's palace; who as astonied with admiration of her incomparable beauty, did no less worship and reverence her, with crosses, signs and tokens, and other divine adorations, according to the custom of the old used rites and ceremonies, than if she were Lady Venus indeed. And shortly after the fame was spread into the next cities and bordering regions, that the Goddess whom the deep seas had borne and brought forth, and the froth or the spurging waves had nourished, to the intent to show her high magnificence and divine power on earth, to such as erst did honour and worship her, was now conversant amongst mortal men: or else that the earth and not the seas, by a new concourse and influence of the celestial planets, had budded and yielded forth a new Venus, endowed with the flower of virginity. So daily more and more increased this opinion, and now is her flying fame dispersed into the next Island, and well-nigh into every part and province of the whole world. Whereupon innumerable strangers resorted from far countries, adventuring t[illegible] journeys

on land, and by great perils on water, to behold this glorious Virgin. By occasion whereof such a contempt grew towards the Goddess Venus, that no person travelled unto the town Paphos, nor to the Isle Gindos, no, nor to Cythera, to worship her. Her ornaments were thrown out, her temples defaced, her pillows and quishions torn, her ceremonies neglected, her images and statues uncrowned, and her bare altars unswept, and foul with the ashes of old burned sacrifice. For why, every person honoured and worshipped this maiden instead of Venus; and in the morning at her first coming abroad, offered unto her oblations, provided banquets, called her by the name of Venus which was not Venus indeed, and in her honour presented flowers and garlands in most reverent fashion.

This sudden change and alteration of celestial honour did greatly inflame and kindle the mind of very Venus, who, unable to temper herself from indignation, shaking her head in raging sort, reasoned with herself in this manner: "Behold the original parent of all these elements, behold the Lady Venus renounced throughout all the world, with whom a mortal maiden is joined now partaker of honour; my name registered in the city of heaven, is profaned

and made vile by terrene absurdities. If I shall suffer any mortal creature to present my majesty in earth, or that any shall hear about a false surmised shape of my person : then in vain did Paris that shepherd, in whose just judgment and confidence the great Jupiter had affiance, prefer me above the residue of the Goddesses for the excellence of my beauty. But she, whatsoever she be that hath usurped mine honour, shall shortly repent her of her unlawful estate." And by and by she called her winged son Cupid, rash enough and hardy, who by his evil manners, contemning all public justice and law, armed with fire and arrows, running up and down in the nights from house to house, and corrupting the lawful marriages of every person, doth nothing but that which is evil ; who although that he were of his own proper nature sufficient prone to work mischief, yet she egged him forward with words and brought him to the city, and showed him Psyche (for so the maiden was called), and having told the cause of her anger, not without great rage : "I pray thee (quoth she), my dear child, by motherly bond of love, by the sweet wounds of thy piercing darts, by the pleasant heat of thy fire, revenge the injury which is done to thy mother, by the false and disobedient

beauty of a mortal maiden, and I pray thee without delay, that she may fall in love with the most miserable creature living, the most poor, the most crooked, and the most vile, that there may be none found in all the world of like wretchedness." When she had spoken these words, she embraced and kissed her son, and took her voyage towards the sea.

When she was come to the sea, she began to call the Gods and Goddesses, who were obedient at her voice. For incontinent came the daughters of Nereus singing with tunes melodiously; Portunus with his bristled and rough beard; Salatia with her bosom full of fish; Palemon the driver of the Dolphin, the trumpeters of Triton leaping hither and thither, and blowing with heavenly noise: such was the company which followed Venus marching towards the ocean sea.

In the mean season Psyche with all her beauty received no fruit of her honour. She was wondered at of all, she was praised of all, but she perceived that no king nor prince, nor any of the inferior sort did repair to woo her. Every one marvelled at her divine beauty, as it were at some image well painted and set out. Her other two sisters which were nothing so greatly exalted by the

people, were royally married to two kings; but the virgin Psyche sitting at home alone lamented her solitary life, and being disquieted both in mind and body, although she pleased all the world, yet hated she in herself her own beauty.

Whereupon the miserable father of this unfortunate daughter, suspecting that the Gods and powers of heaven did envy her estate, went into the town called Miletus to receive the oracle of Apollo, where he made his prayers and offered sacrifice, and desired a husband for his daughter: but Apollo though he were a Grecian and of the country of Ionia, because of the foundation of Miletus, yet he gave answer in Latin verse, the sense whereof was this—

Let Psyche's corpse be clad in mourning weed
And set on rock of yonder hill aloft;
Her husband is no wight of human seed,
But serpent dire and fierce, as may be thought,
Who flies with wings above in starry skies,
And doth subdue each thing with fiery flight.
The Gods themselves and powers that seem so wise
With mighty love be subject to his might.
The rivers black and deadly floods of pain
And darkness eke as thrall to him remain.

The King sometimes happy, when he heard the prophecy of Apollo returned home sad and sorrowful,

and declared to his wife the miserable and unhappy fate of his daughter; then they began to lament, and weep, and passed over many days in great sorrow. But now the time approached of Psyche's marriage: preparation was made, black torches were lighted, the pleasant songs were turned into pitiful cries, the melody of Hymen was ended with deadly howling, the maiden that should be married did wipe her eyes with her veil; all the family and people of the city, weeped likewise, and with great lamentation was ordained a remiss time for that day, but necessity compelled that Psyche should be brought to her appointed place according to the divine commandment.

And when the solemnity was ended, they went to bring this sorrowful spouse, not to her marriage, but to her final end and burial. And while the father and mother of Psyche did go forward, weeping and crying to do this enterprise, Psyche spake unto them in this sort: "Why torment you your unhappy age with continual dolour? why trouble you your spirits, which are more rather mine than yours? why soil ye your faces with tears, which I ought to adore and worship? why tear you my eyes in yours? why pull you your hoary hairs? why knock you your breasts for me? Now you see the

reward of my excellent beauty: now, now, you perceive, but too late, the plague of envy. When the people did honour me and call me new Venus, then you should have wept, then you should have sorrowed, as though I had been then dead: For now I see and perceive that I am come to this misery by the only name of Venus, bring me, and as fortune hath appointed, place me on the top of the rock; I greatly desire to end my marriage, I greatly covet to see my husband. Why do I delay? why should I refuse him that is appointed to destroy all the world?"

Thus ended she her words, and thrust herself amongst the people that followed. Then they brought her to the appointed rock of the high hill, and set her thereon and so departed. The torches and lights were put out with the tears of the people; and every man gone home, the miserable parents well-nigh consumed with sorrow gave themselves to everlasting darkness.

Thus poor Psyche being left alone weeping and trembling on the top of the rock, was blown by the gentle air and of shrilling Zephyrus, and carried from the hill with a meek wind, which retained her garments up, and by little and little brought her down into a deep valley, where she

was laid in a bed of most sweet and fragrant flowers.

Thus fair Psyche being sweetly couched amongst the soft and tender herbs, as in a bed of sote and fragrant flowers, and having qualified the troubles and thoughts of her restless mind, was now well reposed. And when she had refreshed herself sufficiently with sleep, she rose with a more quiet and pacified mind, and fortuned to espy a pleasant wood environed with great and mighty trees. She espied likewise a running river as clear as crystal: in the midst of the wood, well-nigh at the fall of the river, was a princely edifice, wrought and builded, not by the art or hand of man, but by the mighty power of God: and you would judge at the first entry therein, that it were some pleasant and worthy mansion for the powers of heaven. For the embowings above were of cytern and ivory, propped and undermined with pillars of gold, the walls covered and seeled with silver, divers sorts of beasts were graven and carved, that seemed to encounter with such as entered in: all things were so curiously and finely wrought, that it seemed either to be the work of some demi-god, or god himself. The pavement was all of precious stone, divided and cut one

from another, whereon was carved divers kinds of pictures, in such sort, that blessed and thrice blessed were they which might go upon such a pavement: every part and angle of the house was so well adorned, that by reason of the precious stones and inestimable treasure there, it glittered and shone in such sort that the chambers, porches and doors gave light as it had been the sun. Neither otherwise did the other treasure of the house disagree unto so great a majesty, that verily it seemed in every point a heavenly palace fabricate and builded for Jupiter himself.

Then Psyche moved with delectation approached nigh, and taking a bold heart entered into the house, and beheld everything there, with great affection: she saw storehouses wrought exceeding fine, and replenished with abundance of riches. Finally there could nothing be devised which lacked there, but amongst such great store of treasure, this was more marvellous, that there was no closure, bolt, nor lock to keep the same. And when with great pleasure she viewed all these things, she heard a voice without any body that said: "Why do you marvel, madame, at so great riches? behold all that you see is at your commandment: wherefore go you into the chamber

and repose yourself upon the bed, and desire what bath you will have, and we whose voices you hear be your servants, and ready to minister unto you according to your desire. In the mean season, royal meats and dainty dishes shall be prepared for you."

Then Psyche perceived the felicity of divine providence, and according to the advertisement of the incorporal voices, she first reposed herself upon the bed, and then refreshed her body in the bains. This done, she saw the table garnished with meats, and a chair to sit down.

When Psyche was set down, all sorts of divine meats and wines were brought in, not by any body, but as it were with a wind, for she could see no person before her, but only hear voices on every side. After that all the services were brought to the table, one came in and sang invisibly, another played on the harp, but she saw no man. The harmony of the instruments did so greatly thrill in her ears, that though there were no manner of person, yet seemed she in the midst of a multitude of people.

All these pleasures finished, when night approached Psyche went to bed: and when she was laid, that the sweet sleep came upon her, she greatly

feared her virginity, because she was alone: then came her unknown husband and lay with her: and after that he had made a perfect consummation of the marriage, he rose in the morning before day, and departed.

Soon after came her invisible servants, presenting such things as were necessary for her defloration. And thus she passed forth a great while: and, as it happened, the novelty of the things by continual custom did increase her pleasure, but specially the sound of the instruments was a comfort unto her being alone.

During this time that Psyche was in this place or pleasures, her father and mother did nothing but weep and lament, and her two sisters hearing of her most miserable fortune came with great dolour and sorrow to comfort and speak with their parents.

The night following, Psyche's husband spake unto her (for she might feel his eyes, his hands, and his ears), and said: "O my sweet spouse and dear wife, fortune doth menace unto thee imminent peril and danger, whereof I wish thee greatly to beware: For know thou that thy sisters, thinking thou art dead, be greatly troubled, and are come to the mountain by thy steps. Whose lamentations if

thou fortune to hear, beware that thou do in no wise either make answer or look up towards them: for if thou do, thou shalt purchase to me a great sorrow, and to thyself utter destruction." Psyche, hearing her husband, was contented to do all things as he commanded.

After that he was departed, and the night passed away, Psyche lamented and cried all the day following, thinking that now she was past all hope of comfort, in that she was closed within the walls of a prison, deprived of human conversation, and commanded not to aid or assist her sorrowful sisters, no nor once to see them: Thus she passed all the day in weeping and went to bed at night without any refection of meat or bain.

Incontinently after came her husband, who, when he had embraced her sweetly, gan say: "Is it thus that you perform your promise, my sweet wife? What do I find here, pass you all the day and the night in weeping? and will you not cease in your husband's arms? Go to, do what you will, purchase your own destruction, and when you find it so, then remember my words, and repent, but too late."

Then she desired her husband more and more,

assuring him that she should die, unless he would grant that she might see her sisters, whereby she might speak with them and comfort them; whereat at length he was contented, and moreover he willed that she should give them as much gold and jewels as she would. But he gave her a further charge, saying: "Beware that ye covet not, being moved by the pernicious counsel of your sisters, to see the shape of my person, lest by your curiosity you be deprived of so great and worthy estate."

Psyche being glad herewith rendered unto him most entire thanks, and said: "Sweet husband, I had rather die than to be separate from you: for whosoever you be, I love and retain you within my heart, as if you were mine own spirit or Cupid himself: but I pray you grant this likewise, that you would command your servant Zephyrus to bring my sisters down into the valley, as he brought me." Wherewithal she kissed him sweetly, and desired him gently to grant her request, calling him her spouse, her sweetheart, her joy, and her solace, whereby she enforced him to agree to her mind; and when morning came he departed away.

After long search made, the sisters of Psyche

came unto the hill where she was set on the rock, and cried with a loud voice, in such sort that the stones answered again: And when they called their sister by her name, that their lamentable cries came unto her ears, she came forth, and said: "Behold, here is she for whom you weep, I pray you torment yourselves no more, cease your weeping." And by and by she commanded Zephyrus by the appointment of her husband to bring them down: Neither did he delay, for with gentle blasts he retained them up, and laid them softly in the valley: I am not able to express the often embracing, kissing, and greeting which was between them three, all sorrows and tears were then laid apart. "Come in," quoth Psyche, "into our house, and refresh your afflicted minds with your sister." After this she showed them the storehouses of treasure, she caused them to hear the voices which served her, the bain was ready, the meats were brought in, and when they had eaten and filled themselves with divine delicacies, they conceived great envy within their hearts, and one of them being very curious, did demand what her husband was, of what state and who was the Lord of so precious a house, but Psyche, remembering the promise which she made to her husband, feigned

that he was a young man of comely stature, with a flaxen beard, and had great delight in hunting in the hills and dales by. And lest by her long talk she should be found to trip or fail in her words, she filled their laps with gold, silver and jewels, and commanded Zephyrus to carry them away.

When they were brought up to the mountain, they took their ways homeward to their own houses, and murmured with envy that they bare against Psyche, saying: "Behold, cruel and contrary fortune, behold how we, born all of one parent, have divers destinies; but especially we that are the elder two, be married to strange husbands, made as handmaidens, and as it were banished from our country and friends, whereas our youngest sister has so great abundance of treasure and gotten a God to her husband, who hath no skill how to use so great plenty of riches. Saw you not, sister, what was in the house? what great store of jewels, what glittering robes, what gems, what gold we trod on? That if she have a husband according as she affirmeth, there is none that liveth this day more happy in all the world than she. And so it may come to pass, that at length for the great affection and love which he may bear unto her, he may make

her a Goddess: for, by Hercules, such was her countenance, so she behaved herself, that, as a Goddess, she had voices to serve her, and the winds did obey her. But I, poor wretch, have first married a husband elder than my father, more bald than a coot, more weak than a child, and that locketh me up all day in the house."

Then said the other sister: "And in faith I am married to a husband that hath the gout, twyfold, crooked, not courageous in paying my debt; I am fain to rub and mollify his stony fingers with divers sorts of oils, and to wrap them in plasters and salves, so that I soil my white and dainty hands with the corruption of filthy clouts, not using myself like a wife, but more like a servant. And you, my sister, seem likewise to be in bondage, and servitude, wherefore I cannot abide to see our younger sister in such great felicity; saw you not, I pray, how proudly and arrogantly she handled us even now? and how in vaunting herself she uttered her presumptuous mind; how she cast a little gold into our laps, and being weary of our company, commanded that we should be borne and blown away? Verily I live not nor am a woman, but I will deprive her of all her bliss: And if you, my sister, be so far

bent as I, let us consult together, and not utter our mind to any person, no nor yet to our parents, nor tell that ever we saw her. For it sufficeth that we have seen her, whom it repenteth to have seen. Neither let us declare her good fortune to our father, nor to any other, since as they seem not happy whose riches are unknown: so shall she know that she hath sisters, no abjects, but more worthier than she. But now let us go home to our husbands and poor houses, and when we are better instructed, let us return to suppress her pride." So this evil counsel pleased these two evil women, and they hid the treasure which Psyche gave them, and tore their hair, renewing their false and forged tears. When their father and mother beheld them weep and lament still, they doubled their sorrows, and griefs, but full of ire and forced with envy, they took their voyage homewards, devising the slaughter and destruction of their sister.

In the mean season the husband of Psyche did warn her again in the night with these words: "Seest thou not," quoth he, "what peril and danger evil fortune doth threaten unto thee, whereof if thou take not good heed, it will shortly come upon thee. For the unfaithful harlots do greatly endeavour

to set their snares to catch thee, and their purpose is to make and persuade thee to behold my face, which if thou once fortune to see, as I have often told, thou shalt see no more. Wherefore if these naughty hags, armed with wicked minds, do chance to come again, as I think no otherwise but that they will, take heed that thou talk not with them, but simply suffer them to speak what they will. Howbeit if thou canst not restrain thyself, beware that thou have no communication of thy husband, nor answer a word if they fortune to question of me; so will we increase our stock, and this young and tender child, couched in this young and tender belly of thine, if thou conceal my secrets, shall be made an immortal god, otherwise a mortal creature." Then Psyche was very glad that she should bring forth a divine babe, and very joyful in that she should be honoured as a mother: she reckoned and numbered carefully the days and months that passed, and being never with child before, did marvel greatly that in so small a time her belly should swell so big.

But those pestilent and wicked furies, breathing out their serpentine poison, took shipping to bring their enterprise to pass. Then Psyche was warned

again by her husband in this sort: "Behold the last day, the extreme case, and the enemies of thy blood, hath armed themselves against us, pitched their camps, set their host in array, and are marching towards us, for now thy two sisters have drawn their swords, and are ready to slay thee. Oh, with what force are we assailed this day! O sweet Psyche, I pray thee to take pity on thyself, or me, and deliver thy husband, and this infant within thy belly from so great a danger: and see not, neither hear these cursed women, which are not worthy to be called thy sisters, for their great hatred, and breach of sisterly amity; for they will come, like sirens, to the mountain, and yield out their piteous and lamentable cries." When Psyche had heard these words, she sighed sorrowfully, and said: "O dear husband, this long time you have had experience and trial of my faith, and doubt you not but that I will persevere in the same; wherefore command your wind Zephyrus, that he may do as he hath done before, to the intent that where you have charged me not to behold your venerable face, yet that I may comfort myself with the sight of my sisters. I pray you by these beautiful hairs, by these round cheeks delicate and

tender, by your pleasant hot breast, whose shape and face I shall learn at length by the child in my belly, grant the fruit of my desire, refresh your dear spouse Psyche with joy, who is bound and linked unto you for ever. I little esteem to see your visage and figure, little do I regard the night and darkness thereof, for you are my only light." Her husband, being as it were enchanted with these words, and compelled by violence of her often embracing, wiping away her tears with his hair, did yield unto his wife. And when morning came departed as he accustomed to do.

Now her sisters arrived on land, and never rested till they came to the rock, without visiting of their father and mother, and leaped down rashly from the hill themselves: Then Zephyrus according to the divine commandment brought them down, though it were against his will, and laid them in the valley without any harm. By and by they went into the palace to their sister without leave, and when they had eftsoons embraced their prey, and thanked her with flattering words for the treasure which she gave them, they said: "O dear sister Psyche, know you that you are now no more a child, but a mother: O what great joy bear you unto us in your belly:

what a comfort will it be unto all the house ! how happy shall we be, that shall see this infant nourished amongst so great plenty of treasure ! that if he be like his parents, as it is necessary he should, there is no doubt but a new Cupid shall be born." By this kind of means they went about to win Psyche by little and little ; but because they were weary with travel, they sat them down in chairs, and after that they had washed their bodies in bains, they went into a parlour, where all kind of meats were ready prepared. Psyche commanded one to play with his harp ; it was done. Then immediately others sang, others tuned their instruments, but no person was seen ; by whose sweet harmony and modulation the sisters of Psyche were greatly delighted.

Howbeit the wickedness of these cursed women was nothing suppressed by the sweet noise of these instruments, but they settled themselves to work their treason against Psyche, demanding who was her husband, and of what parentage. Then she, having forgotten, by too much simplicity, that which she had spoken before of her husband, invented a new answer ; and said that her husband was of a great province, a marchant, and a man of middle age, having his beard intersparsed with gray

hairs, which when she had said, because she would have no further talk, she filled their laps full of gold and silver, and bid Zephyrus to bear them away.

In their return homeward they murmured with themselves saying: "How say you, sister, to so apparent a lie of Psyche's? For first she said that her husband was a young man of flourishing years, and had a flaxen beard, and now she saith that it is half gray with age; what is he that in so short space can become so old? You shall find it no otherwise, my sister, but that either this cursed queen hath invented a great lie, or else that she never saw the shape of her husband. And if it be so that she never saw him, then verily she is married to some God, and hath a young God in her belly; but if it be a divine babe, and fortune to come to the ears of my mother (as God forbid it should) then may I go and hang myself; wherefore let us go to our parents and with forged lies let us colour the matter."

After they were thus inflamed, and had visited their parents, they returned again to the mountain, and by the aid of the wind Zephyrus were carried down into the valley, and after they had strained their eyelids to enforce themselves to weep, they called unto Psyche in this sort: "Thou, ignorant of

so great evil, thinkest thyself sure and happy, and sittest at home nothing regarding thy peril, whereas we go about thy affairs, and are careful lest any harm should happen unto thee : for we are credibly informed, neither can we but utter it unto thee, that there is a great serpent full of deadly poison, with a ravenous and gaping throat, that lieth with thee every night. Remember the oracle of Apollo, who pronounced that thou shouldest be married to a dire and fierce serpent ; and many of the inhabitants hereby, and such as hunt about in the country, affirm that they saw him yester-night returning from pasture and swimming over the river, whereby they do undoubtedly say that he will not pamper thee long with delicate meats, but when the time of delivery shall approach, he will devour both thee and thy child. Wherefore advise thyself, whether thou wilt agree unto us that are careful for thy safety, and so avoid the peril of death, and be contented to live with thy sisters, or whether thou wilt remain with the serpent, and in the end to be swallowed into the gulf of his body. And if it be so, that thy solitary life, thy conversation with voices, this servile and dangerous pleasure, and the love of the serpent do more delight thee : say not but that

we have played the parts of natural sisters in warning thee." Then the poor simple miser Psyche was moved with the fear of so dreadful words, and being amazed in her mind, did clean forget the admonitions of her husband and her own promises made unto him; and throwing herself headlong into extreme misery, with a wan and sallow countenance, scantly uttering a third word, at length gan say in this sort:

"O my most dear sisters, I heartily thank you for your great kindness towards me, and I am now verily persuaded that they which you hear of, have informed you of nothing but truth: for I never saw the shape of my husband, neither know I from whence he came, only I hear his voice in the night; insomuch that I have an uncertain husband, and one that loveth not the light of the day, which causeth me to suspect that he is a beast, as you affirm. Moreover I do greatly fear to see him, for he doth menace and threaten great evil unto me, if I should go about to spy and behold his shape. Wherefore, my loving sisters, if you have any wholesome remedy for your sister in danger, give it now presently." Then they opening the gates of their subtile minds, did put away all privy guile, and egged her forward in her fearful thoughts, per-

suading her to do as they would have her ; whereupon one of them began and said : "Because that we little esteem any peril or danger to save your life, we intend to show you the best way and mean as we may possibly do. Take a sharp razor and put it under the pillow of your bed, and see that you have ready a privy burning lamp with oil, hid under some part of the hanging of the chamber ; and, finely dissimulating the matter, when, according to his custom, he cometh to bed and sleepeth soundly, arise you secretly, and with your bare feet go and take your lamp, with the razor in your right hand, and with valiant force cut off the head of the poisonous serpent, wherein we will aid and assist you : and when by the death of him, you shall be made salve, we will marry you to some comely man." After they had thus inflamed the heart of their sister, fearing lest some danger might happen unto them by reason of their evil counsel, they were carried by the wind Zephyrus to the top of the mountain, and so they ran away, and took shipping.

When Psyche was left alone (saving that she seemed not to be alone, being stirred by so many furies) she was in a tossing mind, like the waves of the sea ; and although her will was obstinate, and

resisted to put in execution the counsel of her sisters, yet she was in doubtful and divers opinions touching her calamity. Sometime she would, sometime she would not, sometime she is bold, sometime she feareth, sometime she mistrusteth, sometime she is moved, sometime she hateth the beast, sometime she loveth her husband: but at length the night came, whenas she made preparation for her wicked intent.

Soon after her husband came, and when he had kissed and embraced her, he fell asleep. Then Psyche (somewhat feeble in body and mind, yet moved by cruelty of fate) received boldness, and brought forth the lamp, and took the razor, so by her audacity she changed her kind. But when she took the lamp, and came to the bedside, she saw the most meek and sweetest beast of all beasts, even fair Cupid couched fairly, at whose sight the very lamp increased his light for joy, and the razor turned his edge. But when Psyche saw so glorious a body, she greatly feared, and, amazed in mind, with a pale countenance, all trembling, fell on her knees, and thought to hide the razor, yea verily in her own heart; which she had undoubtedly done, had it not through fear of so great an enterprise fallen out of her hand. And when she saw and

beheld the beauty of his divine visage she was well recreated in her mind. She saw his hairs of gold, that yielded out a sweet savour: his neck more white than milk: his purple cheeks, his hair hanging comely behind and before, the brightness whereof did darken the light of the lamp: his tender plume-feathers dispersed upon his shoulders like shining flowers, and trembling hither and thither; and his other parts of his body so smooth and soft that it did not repent Venus to bear such a child. At the bed's feet lay his bow, quiver, and arrows, that be the weapons of so great a God; which when Psyche did curiously behold, and marvelling at the weapons of her husband, took one of the arrows out of the quiver, and pricked herself withal, wherewith she was so grievously wounded that the blood followed, and thereby of her own accord she added love upon love; then more and more broiling in the love of Cupid, she embraced him and kissed him a thousand times fearing the measure of his sleep. But alas! while she was in this great joy, whether it were for envy, or for desire to touch this amiable body likewise, there fell out a drop of burning oil from the lamp upon the right shoulder of the God. O rash and bold lamp, the vile ministry of love, how darest

thou be so bold as to burn the God of all fire when he invented thee, to the intent that all lovers might with more joy pass the nights in pleasure?

The God being burned in this sort, and perceiving that promise and faith was broken, he fled away without utterance of any word, from the eyes and hands of his most unhappy wife. But Psyche fortuned to catch him, as he was rising, by the right thigh, and held him fast as he flew about in the air, until such time that constrained by weariness she let go and fell down upon the ground. But Cupid followed her down, and lighted upon the top of a cypress tree, and angerly spake unto her in this manner: "O simple Psyche, consider with thyself, how I, little regarding the commandment of my mother, who willed me that thou shouldst be married to a man of base and miserable condition, did come myself from heaven to love thee, and wounded my own body with my proper weapons to have thee to my spouse. And did I seem a beast unto thee, that thou shouldst go about to cut off my head with a razor, who loved thee so well? Did not I always give thee in charge? did not I gently will thee to beware? But those cursed aiders and counsellors of thine, shall be worthily rewarded for

their pains. As for thee, thou shalt be sufficiently punished by my absence." When he had spoken these words, he took his flight into the air.

Then Psyche fell flat on the ground, and as long as she might see her husband, she cast her eyes after him into the air, weeping and lamenting piteously; but when he was gone out of her sight, she threw herself into the next running river, for the great anguish and dolour that she was in, for the lack of her husband. Howbeit the water would not suffer her to be drowned, but took pity upon her, in the honour of Cupid which accustomed to broil and burn the river, and so threw her upon the bank amongst the herbs.

Then Pan, the rustical God, sitting on the river-side, embracing and teaching the Goddess Canna to tune her songs and pipes, by whom were feeding the young and tender goats, after that he perceived Psyche in so sorrowful case, not ignorant, I know not by what means, of her miserable estate, endeavoured to pacify her in this sort: "O fair maid, I am a rustic and rude herdsman, howbeit, by reason of my old age, expert in many things; for as far as I can learn by conjecture, which, according as wise men do term, is called di[illegible]

by your uncertain gait, your pale hue, your sobbing sighs, and your watery eyes, that you are greatly in love. Wherefore hearken to me, and go not about to slay yourself, nor weep not at all, but rather adore and worship the great God Cupid, and win him unto you by your gentle promise of service." When the God of Shepherds had spoken these words, she gave no answer but made reverence unto him as to a God, and so departed.

After that Psyche had gone a little way, she fortuned unawares to come to a city where the husband of one of her sisters did dwell; which when Psyche did understand, she caused that her sister had knowledge of her coming, and so they met together, and after great embracing and salutation, the sister of Psyche demanded the cause of her travel thither. "Marry," quoth she, "do not you remember the counsel that you gave me, whereby you would that I should kill the beast, who under colour of my husband did lie with me every night? You shall understand, that as soon as I brought forth the lamp to see and behold his shape, I perceived that he was the son of Venus, even Cupid himself that lay with me. Then I, being stroken with great pleasure, and desirous to embrace him, could not

thoroughly assuage my delight, but alas! by evil chance, the boiling oil of the lamp fortuned to fall on his shoulder, which caused him to awake, who, seeing me armed with fire and weapon, gan say: 'How darest thou be so bold as to do so great a mischief? Depart from me, and take such things as thou didst bring: for I will have thy sister (and named you) to my wife, and she shall be placed in my felicity.' And by and by he commanded Zephyrus to carry me away from the bounds of his house."

Psyche had scantly finished her tale, but her sister, pierced with the prick of carnal desire and wicked envy, ran home, and, feigning to her husband that she had heard of the death of her parents, took shipping and came to the mountain. And although there blew a contrary wind, yet being brought in a vain hope she cried: "O Cupid, take me, a more worthy wife, and thou Zephyrus bear down thy mistress!" and so she cast herself down headlong from the mountain; but she fell not into the valley neither alive nor dead, for all the members and parts of her body were torn amongst the rocks, whereby she was made a prey to the birds and wild beasts, as she worthily deserved.

Neither was the vengeance of the other delayed; for Psyche travelling in that country fortuned to come to another city, where her other sister did dwell, to whom when she had declared all such things as she told to her first sister, she ran likewise unto the rock and was slain in like sort. Then Psyche travelled about in the country to seek her husband Cupid, but he was gotten into his mother's chamber, and there bewailed the sorrowful wound, which he caught by the oil of the burning lamp.

Then the white bird the Gull, which swimmeth on the waves of the water, flew towards the ocean sea, where she found Venus washing and bathing herself: to whom she declared that her son was burned and in danger of death; and moreover that it was a common bruit in the mouth of every person who spake evil of all the family of Venus, that her son doth nothing but haunt harlots in the mountain, and she herself lasciviously used to riot in the sea; whereby they say, that they are now become no more gracious, no more pleasant, no more gentle, but incivil, monstrous and horrible: moreover the marriages are not for any amity, or for love of procreation, but full of envy, discord and debate. This

the curious Gull did clatter in the ears of Venus, reprehending her son. But Venus began to cry, and said: "What, hath my son gotten any love? I pray thee, gentle bird, that dost serve me so faithfully, tell me what she is and what is her name, that hath troubled my son in such sort? whether she be any of the Nymphs, of the number of the Goddesses, of the company of the Muses, or of the mistery of my Graces?" To whom the bird answered: "Madame, I know not what she is, but this I know, that she is called Psyche." Then Venus with indignation cried out: "What, is it she? the usurper of my beauty, the vicar of my name? What, will he think that I was a bawd, by whose show he fell acquainted with the maid?" And immediately she departed, and went to her chamber, where she found her son wounded as it was told unto her, whom when she beheld she cried out in this sort.

"Is this an honest thing? is this honourable to thy parents? is this reason that thou hast violated and broken the commandment of thy mother and sovereign mistress? And whereas thou shouldst have vexed my enemy with loathsome love, thou hast done contrary? For being but of tender and unripe years, thou hast with too licentious appetite embraced

my most mortal foe, to whom I shall be made a mother, and she a daughter. Thou presumest and thinkest, thou trifling boy, thou varlet, and without all reverence, that thou art most worthy and excellent, and that I am not able by reason of mine age to have another son, which if I might have, thou shouldst well understand that I would bear a more worthier than thou. But to work thee a greater despite, I do determine to adopt one of my servants, and to give him these wings, this fire, this bow and these arrows, and all other furniture which I gave to thee, not for this purpose, neither is anything given to thee of thy father for this intent: but first thou hast been evil brought up and instructed in thy youth: thou hast thy hands ready and sharp: thou hast often offended thy ancients, and especially me that am thy mother, thou hast pierced me with thy darts, thou contemnest me as a widow, neither dost thou regard thy valiant and invincible father: and to anger me more, thou art amorous of wenches and harlots. But I will cause that thou shalt shortly repent thee, and that this marriage shall be dearly bought. To what a point am I now driven: what shall I do? Whither shall I go? how shall I repress this beast? Shall I ask aid of mine enemy Sobriety, whom I have often

offended to engender thee? or shall I seek for counsel of every poor and rustic woman? No, no, yet had I rather die; howbeit I will not cease my vengeance; to her must I have recourse for help, and to none other, I mean to Sobriety, who may correct thee sharply, take away thy quiver, deprive thee of thy arrows, unbend thy bow, quench thy fire, and, which is more, subdue thy body with punishment; and when that I have rased and cut off this thy hair, which I have dressed with mine own hands, and made to glitter like gold, and when I have clipped thy wings which I myself have caused to burgen, then shall I think to have sufficiently revenged myself upon thee, for the injury which thou hast done." When she had spoken these words she departed in a great rage out of her chamber.

Immediately as she was going away, came Juno and Ceres demanding the cause of her anger. Then Venus made answer: "Verily you are come to comfort my sorrow, but I pray you with all diligence to seek out one whose name is Psyche, who is a vagabond and runneth about the countries, and as I think, you are not ignorant of the bruit of my son Cupid, and of his demeanour, which I am ashamed to declare." Then they understanding and knowing

the whole matter, endeavoured to mitigate the ire of Venus in this sort.

"What is the cause, madame, or how hath your son so offended, that you should so greatly accuse his love, and blame him by reason that he is amorous? and why should you seek the death of her, whom he doth fancy? We most humbly entreat you to pardon his fault, if he have accorded to the mind of any maiden. What, do not you know that he is a young man? or have you forgotten of what years he is? doth he seem always to you to be a child? You are his mother, and a kind woman, will you continually search out his dalliance? Will you blame his luxury? Will you bridle his love, and will you reprehend your own art and delights in him? What God or man is he, that can endure that you should sow or disperse your seed of love in every place, and to make a restraint thereof within your own doors? Certes, you will be the cause of the suppression of the public places of young dames."

In this sort these Goddesses endeavoured to pacify her mind, and to excuse Cupid with all their power, although he were absent, for fear of his darts and shafts of love. But Venus would in no wise assuage her heat; but thinking that they did but trifle and

taunt at her injuries, she departed from them, and took her voyage towards the sea in all haste.

In the mean season Psyche hurled herself hither and thither, to seek for her husband; the rather because she thought, that if he would not be appeased with the sweet flattery of his wife, yet he would take mercy upon her at her servile and continual prayers. And, espying a church on the top of a high hill, she said: "What can I tell whether my husband and master be there or no?" Wherefore she went thitherward, and with great pain and travail, moved by hope, after that she climbed to the top of the mountain, she came to the temple and went in: whereas, behold, she espied sheafs of corn lying on a heap, blades wreathed like garlands, and reeds of barley; moreover she saw hooks, scythes, sickles and other instruments to reap, but everything lay out of order, and as it were cast in by the hands of labourers; which when Psyche saw, she gathered up and put everything duly in order, thinking that she would not despise or contemn the Temples of any of the Gods, but rather get the favour and benevolence of them all. By and by Ceres came in and beholding her busy and curious in her chapel, cried out afar off, and said: "O

Psyche, needful of mercy, Venus searcheth for thee in every place to revenge herself and to punish thee grievously, but thou hast more mind to be here, and carest for nothing less than for thy safety." Then Psyche fell on her knees before her, watering her feet with her tears, wiping the ground with her hair, and with great weeping and lamentation desired pardon, saying: "O great and holy Goddess, I pray thee by thy plenteous and liberal right hand, by thy joyful ceremonies of harvest, by the secrets of thy sacrifice, by the flying chariots of thy Dragons, by the tillage of the ground of Sicily which thou hast invented, by the marriage of Proserpina, by the diligent inquisition of thy daughter, and by the other secrets which are within the temple of Eleusis in the land of Athens: take pity on me thy servant Psyche, and let me hide myself a few days amongst these sheafs of corn, until the ire of so great a goddess be past, or until that I be refreshed of my great labour and travail." Then answered Ceres: "Verily, Psyche, I am greatly moved by thy prayers and tears, and desire with all my heart to aid thee; but if I should suffer thee to be hidden here, I should incur the displeasure of my cousin, with whom I have made a treaty of peace, and an ancient

promise of amity: wherefore I advise thee to depart hence, and take it not in evil part in that I will not suffer thee to abide and remain within my temple."

Then Psyche driven away contrary to her hope, was double afflicted with sorrow, and so she returned back again. And behold, she perceived afar off in a valley a temple standing within a forest, fair and curiously wrought; and minding to overpass no place, whither better hope did direct her, and to the intent she would desire the pardon of every God, she approached nigh to the sacred doors, whereas she saw precious riches and vestments engraven with letters of gold, hanging upon branches of trees, and the posts of the temple, testifying the name of the Goddess Juno to whom they were dedicated. Then she kneeled down upon her knees, and embracing the altar with her hands, and wiping her tears, gan pray in this sort. "O dear spouse and sister of the great God Jupiter, which art adored and worshipped among the great temples of Samos, called upon by women with child, worshipped at high Carthage, because thou werest brought from heaven by the Lion, the rivers of the flood Inachus do celebrate thee, and know that thou art the wife of the great God and the Goddess of Goddesses. All the East part of the

world hath thee in veneration, all the world calleth thee Lucina: I pray thee to be mine advocate in my tribulations, deliver me from the great danger which pursueth me, and save me that am wearied with so long labours and sorrow, for I know that it is thou that succourest and helpest such women as are with child and in danger." Then Juno, hearing the prayers of Psyche, appeared unto her in all her royalty, saying: "Certes, Psyche, I would gladly help thee, but I am ashamed to do anything contrary to the will of my daughter-in-law Venus, whom always I have loved as mine own child; moreover I shall incur the danger of the law intituled *De servo corrupto*, whereby I am forbidden to retain any servant fugitive against the will of his master."

Then Psyche, cast off likewise by Juno, as without all hope of the recovery of her husband, reasoned with herself in this sort: "Now what comfort or remedy is left to my afflictions, whenas my prayers will nothing avail with the Goddesses? What shall I do? Whither shall I go? In what cave or darkness shall I hide myself to avoid the furor of Venus? Why do I not take a good heart and offer myself with humility unto her whose anger I have

wrought? what do I know whether he, whom I seek for, be in the house of his mother or no?" Thus being in doubt, poor Psyche prepared herself to her own danger, and devised how she might make her orison and prayer unto Venus.

After that Venus was weary with searching by sea and land for Psyche, she returned toward heaven, and commanded that one should prepare her chariot, which her husband Vulcan gave unto her by reason of marriage, so finely wrought that neither gold nor silver could be compared to the brightness thereof. Four white pigeons guided the chariot with great diligence, and when Venus was entered in, a number of sparrows flew chirping about, making sign of joy, and all other kind of birds sang sweetly for showing the coming of the great Goddess: the clouds gave place, the heavens opened and received her joyfully, the birds that followed nothing feared the eagles, hawks and other ravenous fowl in the air. Incontinently she went into the royal palace of the God Jupiter, and with proud and bold petition, demanded the service of Mercury in certain of her affairs, whereunto Jupiter consented. Then with much joy she descended from Heaven with Mercury, and gave him an earnest charge to put in execution his

words, saying: "O my brother, born in Arcadia, thou knowest well that I (who am thy sister) did never enterprise to do anything without thy presence, thou knowest also how long I have sought for a girl and cannot find her, wherefore there resteth nothing else save that thou with thy trumpet do pronounce the reward to such as take her. See thou put in execution my commandment, and declare, that whatsoever he be that retaineth her wittingly against my will shall not defend himself by any mean or excusation." Which when she had spoken, she delivered unto him a label wherein was contained the name of Psyche and the residue of his publication, which done she departed away to her lodging. By and by Mercury (not delaying the matter) proclaimed throughout all the world, that whatsoever he were that could tell any tidings of a King's fugitive daughter, the servant of Venus, named Psyche, should bring word to Mercury, and for reward of his pains he should receive seven sweet cosses of Venus. After that Mercury had pronounced these things, every man was inflamed with desire to search out Psyche.

This proclamation was the cause that put away all doubt from Psyche, who was scantly come in

sight of the house of Venus, but one of her servants called Custom came out, who espying Psyche cried with a loud voice : "O wicked harlot as thou art, now at length thou shalt know that thou hast a mistress above thee. What, dost thou make thyself ignorant as thou didst not understand what travel we have taken in searching for thee ? I am glad that thou art come into my hands ; thou art now in the gulf of Hell, and shalt abide the pain and punishment of thy great contumacy." And therewithal she took her by the hair, and brought her before the presence of the goddess Venus.

When Venus espied her she began to laugh, and as angry persons accustom to do, she shaked her head and scratched her right ear, saying : "O Goddess, Goddess, you are now come at length to visit your mother, or else to see your husband that is in danger of death by your means, be you assured I will handle you like a daughter ; where be my maidens Sorrow and Sadness ?" To whom, when they came, she delivered Psyche to be cruelly tormented ; then they fulfilled the commandment of their mistress, and after they had piteously scourged her with whips and rods, they presented her again before Venus. Then she began to laugh again, say-

ing: "Behold she thinketh that by reason of her great belly, which she hath gotten by playing the whore, to move me to pity, and to make me a grandmother to her child. Am not I happy, that in the flourishing time of all mine age shall be called a grandmother, and the son of a vile harlot shall be accounted the nephew of Venus? Howbeit I am a fool to term him by the name of son, since as the marriage was made between unequal persons, in the fields without witnesses, and not by the consent of their parents, wherefore the marriage is illegitimate, and the child, that shall be born, a bastard, if we fortune to suffer thee to live till thou be delivered."

When Venus had spoken these words she leaped upon the face of poor Psyche, and, tearing her apparel, took her violently by the hair, and dashed her head upon the ground. Then she took a great quantity of wheat, barley meal, poppy seed, peas, lentils and beans, and mingled them all together on a heap, saying: "Thou evil-favoured girl, thou seemest unable to get the grace of thy lover by no other means but only by diligent and painful service, wherefore I will prove what thou canst do; see that thou separate all these grains one from another, disposing them

orderly in their quality, and let it be done before night." When she had appointed this task unto Psyche, she departed to a great banquet that was prepared that day.

But Psyche went not about to dissever the grain, as being a thing impossible to be brought to pass, by reason it lay so confusedly scattered; but being astonished at the cruel commandment of Venus, sat still and said nothing. Then the little pismere the Emmot, taking pity of her great difficulty and labour, cursing the cruelness of the wife of Jupiter and of so evil a mother, ran about hither and thither, and called to her all the ants of the country, saying: "I pray you, my friends, ye quick sons of the ground, the mother of all things, take mercy on this poor maid espoused to Cupid, who is in great danger of her person. I pray you help her with all diligence." Incontinently one came after another dissevering and dividing the grain, and after that they had put each kind of corn in order they ran away again in all haste.

When night came, Venus returned home from the banquet well tippled with wine, smelling of balm, and crowned with garlands of roses, who when she espied what Psyche had done, gan say: "This is

not the labour of thy hands, but rather of his that is amorous of thee." Then she gave her a morsel of brown bread, and went to sleep.

In the mean season Cupid was closed fast in the most surest chamber of the house, partly because he should not hurt himself with wanton dalliance, and partly because he should not speak with his love: so these two lovers were divided one from another.

When night was passed, Venus called Psyche and said: "Seest thou yonder forest that extendeth out in length with the river? There be great sheep shining like gold, and kept by no manner of person: I command thee that thou go thither and bring me home some of the wool of their fleeces." Psyche arose willingly, not to do her commandment, but to throw herself headlong into the water to end her sorrow. Then a green reed, inspired by divine inspiration with a gracious tune and melody, gan say: "O Psyche, I pray thee not to trouble or pollute my water by the death of thee, and yet beware that thou go not towards the terrible sheep of this coast, until such time as the heat of the sun be past; for when the sun is in his force, then seem they most dreadful, and furious with their sharp horns,

their stony foreheads, and their gaping throats wherewith they arm themselves to the danger of mankind: but until the midday is past and the heat assuaged, and until they have refreshed themselves in the river, thou mayst hide thyself here by me under this great plane-tree; and as soon as their great fury is past, thou mayst go among the thickets and bushes under the woodside and gather the locks of their golden fleeces, which thou shalt find hanging upon the briars." Thus spake the gentle and benign reed, showing a mean to Psyche to save her life, which she bare well in memory, and with all diligence went and gathered up such locks as she found, and put them in her apron and carried them home to Venus: howbeit the danger of this second labour did not please her, nor give her sufficient witness of the good service of Psyche, but with a sour resemblance of laughter, she said: "Of certainty I know that this is not thy fact, but I will prove if thou be of so stout a courage and singular prudence as thou seemst."

Then Venus spake unto Psyche again, saying: "Seest thou the top of yonder great hill, from whence there runneth down water of black and deadly colour, which nourisheth the floods of Styx

and Cocytus? I charge thee to go thither and bring me a vessel of that water." Wherewithal she gave her a bottle of crystal, menacing and threatening her rigorously.

Then poor Psyche went in all haste to the top of the mountain, rather to end her life than to fetch any water; and when she was come up to the ridge of the hill, she perceived that it was impossible to bring it to pass, for she saw a great rock gushing out most horrible fountains of waters, which ran down and fell by many stops and passages into the valley beneath. On each side she saw great dragons, stretching out their long and bloody necks, that never slept, but appointed to keep the river there: the waters seemed to themselves likewise saying: "Away, away, what wilt thou do? Fly, fly or else thou wilt be slain." Then Psyche, seeing the impossibility of this affair, stood still as though she were transformed into stone; and although she was present in body, yet was she absent in spirit and sense, by reason of the great peril which she saw; in so much that she could not comfort herself with weeping, such was the present danger she was in.

But the royal bird of great Jupiter, the Eagle,

remembering his old service, which he had done, whenas by the prick of Cupid he brought up the boy Ganymede to the heavens, to be made the butler of Jupiter, and minding to show the like service in the person of the wife of Cupid, came from the high house of the skies, and said unto Psyche: "O simple woman, without all experience, dost thou think to get or dip up any drop of this dreadful water? No, no, assure thyself thou art never able to come nigh it, for the Gods themselves do greatly fear at the sight thereof. What! have you not heard that it is a custom among men to swear by the puissance of the Gods: And the Gods do swear by the majesty of the river Styx? But give me thy bottle"; and suddenly he took it, and filled it with the water of the river, and taking his flight through those cruel and horrible dragons, brought it unto Psyche: who being very joyful thereof, presented it to Venus, who would not be appeased, but menacing more and more, said: "What! thou seemest unto me a very Witch and Enchantress, that bringest these things to pass; howbeit thou shalt do one thing more. Take this box and go to Hell to Proserpina, and desire her to send me a little of her beauty, as much as will serve me the space of one day,

and say that such as I had is consumed away since my son fell sick; but return again quickly, for I must dress myself therewithal, and go to the theatre of the Gods." Then poor Psyche perceived the end of all her fortune, thinking verily that she should never return, and not without cause, as she was compelled to go to the gulf and furies of Hell. Wherefore without any further delay, she went up to a high tower to throw herself down headlong, thinking that it was the next and readiest way to Hell, but the Tower, as inspired, spake unto her, saying: "O poor miser, why goest thou about to slay thyself? why dost thou rashly yield unto thy last peril and danger? know thou that if thy spirit be once separate from thy body, thou shalt surely go to Hell, but never to return again; wherefore hearken to me. Lacedaemon, a city of Greece, is not far hence. Go thou thither and inquire for the hill Tænarus, whereas thou shalt find a hole leading to Hell, even to the palace of Pluto: but take heed that thou go not with empty hands to that place of darkness; but carry two sops sodden in the flour of barley and honey in thy hands, and two halfpence in thy mouth; and when thou hast passed a good part of that way, thou shalt see a lame Ass

carrying of wood, and a lame fellow driving hi
who will desire thee to give him up the stic
that fall down, but pass thou on and do nothin
by and by thou shalt come unto the river of H
whereas Charon is ferryman, who will first ha
his fare paid him, before he will carry the so
over the river in his boat. Whereby you may s
that avarice reigneth amongst the dead; neith
Charon nor Pluto will do anything for noug
For if it be a poor man that would pass ov
and lacketh money, he shall be compelled to
in his journey before they will show him any reli
Wherefore deliver to carrion Charon one of t
halfpence, which thou bearest for thy passage, a
let him receive it out of thy mouth. And
shall come to pass as thou sittest in the boat, th
shalt see an old man swimming on the top of t
river holding up his deadly hands, and desiring th
to receive him into the bark, but have no rega
to his piteous cry. When thou art passed over t
flood, thou shalt espy old women spinning who w
desire thee to help them, but beware thou do n
consent unto them in any case, for these and li
baits and traps will Venus set to make thee let f
one of thy sops: and think not that the keepi

of thy sops is a light matter, for if thou lose one of them thou shalt be assured never to return again to this world. Then thou shalt see a great and marvellous dog with three heads, barking continually at the souls of such as enter in; by reason he can do them no other harm, he lieth day and night before the gate of Proserpina, and keepeth the house of Pluto with great diligence, to whom if thou cast one of thy sops, thou mayst have access to Proserpina without all danger. She will make thee good cheer, and entertain thee with delicate meat and drink, but sit thou upon the ground and desire brown bread, and then declare thy message unto her; and when thou hast received such beauty as she giveth, in thy return appease the rage of the dog with thy other sop, and give thy other halfpenny to covetous Charon, and come the same way again into the world as thou wentest. But above all things have a regard that thou look not in the box, neither be not too curious about the treasure of the divine beauty."

In this manner the Tower spake unto Psyche, and advertised her what she should do: and immediately she took two halfpence, two sops, and all things necessary, and went to the mountain Taenarus to go towards Hell.

After that Psyche had passed by the lame Ass, paid her halfpenny for passage, neglected the old man in the river, denied to help the women spinning, and filled the ravenous mouth of the dog with a sop, she came to the chamber of Proserpina. There Psyche would not sit in any royal seat, nor eat any delicate meats, but kneeling at the feet of Proserpina, only contented with coarse bread, declared her message, and after she had received a mystical secret in the box she departed, and stopped the mouth of the dog with the other sop, and paid the boatman the other halfpenny.

When Psyche was returned from Hell to the light of the world, she was ravished with great desire, saying: "Am not I a fool that knowing that I carry here the divine beauty, will not take a little thereof to garnish my face, to please my lover withal?" And by and by she opened the box, where she could perceive no beauty nor anything else, save only an infernal and deadly sleep, which immediately invaded all her members as soon as the box was uncovered, in such sort that she fell down on the ground, and lay there as a sleeping corpse.

But Cupid being now healed of his wound and malady, not able to endure the absence of Psyche,

got him secretly out at a window of the chamber where he was enclosed, and, receiving his wings, took his flight towards his loving wife; whom when he had found he wiped away the sleep from her face, and put it again into the box, and awaked her with the tip of one of his arrows, saying: "O wretched caitiff, behold thou werest well-nigh perished again with thy overmuch curiosity; well, go thou, and do thy message to my mother, and in the mean season I will provide for all things accordingly." Wherewithal he took his flight into the air, and Psyche brought her present to Venus.

Cupid being more and more in love with Psyche, and fearing the displeasure of his mother, did pierce into the heavens, and arrived before Jupiter to declare his cause. Then Jupiter after that he had eftsoons embraced him, gan say in this manner: "O my well-beloved son, although thou hast not given due reverence and honour unto me as thou oughtest to do, but hast rather soiled and wounded this my breast, whereby the laws and order of the elements and planets be disposed, with continual assaults of terrene luxury and against all laws, and the discipline Julia, and the utility of the public weal, in transforming my divine beauty into serpents,

fire, savage beasts, birds and bulls. Howbeit, remembering my modesty, and that I have nourished thee with mine own proper hands, I will do and accomplish all thy desire, so that thou canst beware of spiteful and envious persons. And if there be any excellent maiden of comely beauty in the world, remember yet the benefit which I shall show unto thee, by recompense of her love towards me again." When he had spoken these words, he commanded Mercury to call all the Gods to council, and if any of the celestial powers did fail of appearance, he should be condemned in ten thousand pounds: which sentence was such a terror unto all the Gods, that the high theatre was replenished, and Jupiter began to speak in this sort: "O ye Gods, registered in the books of the Muses, you all know this young man Cupid, whom I have nourished with mine own hands, whose raging flames of his first youth I thought best to bridle and restrain. It sufficeth in that he is defamed in every place for his adulterous living, wherefore all occasion ought to be taken away by mean of marriage: he hath chosen a maiden that fancieth him well, and hath bereaved her of her virginity, let him have her still and possess

her according to his own pleasure." Then he returned to Venus, and said: "And you, my daughter, take you no care, neither fear the dishonour of your progeny and estate, neither have regard in that it is a mortal marriage, for it seemeth unto me just, lawful, and legitimate by the law civil."

Incontinently after, Jupiter commanded Mercury to bring up Psyche, the spouse of Cupid, into the palace of heaven. And then he took a pot or immortality, and said: "Hold, Psyche, and drink to the end thou mayst be immortal, and that Cupid may be thine everlasting husband."

By and by the great banquet and marriage feast was sumptuously prepared. Cupid sat down with his dear spouse between his arms: Juno likewise with Jupiter, and all the other Gods in order. Ganymede filled the pot of Jupiter, and Bacchus served the rest. Their drink was nectar, the wine of the Gods. Vulcan prepared supper, the Hours decked up the house with roses and other sweet smells, the Graces threw about balm, the Muses sang with sweet harmony, Apollo tuned pleasantly to the harp, Venus danced finely, Satyr and Pan played on their pipes: and thus Psyche was married

to Cupid, and after she was delivered of a child, whom we call Pleasure.

This the trifling old woman declared to the captive maiden, but I, poor Ass, not standing far off was not a little sorry in that I lacked pen and ink to write so worthy a tale.

THE Ass made a valiant attempt to run away with the maiden, but both were recaptured; and it would have gone hardly with her, had not a rescue party come up in the nick of time and set her free. The poor Ass, delivered over in gratitude to a man with orders to feed him well and give him liberty, was instead of this set to hard drudging tasks, and passed through many and great dangers; he was lost and recovered, bought and sold, until by and by he came into the hands of a troupe of travelling mountebanks, a troupe of the wandering priests of Cybele, whom he describes in these terms:—

The day following, I saw a great number of persons apparelled in divers colours, having painted faces, mitres on their heads, vestments coloured like saffron, surplices of silk, and on their feet yellow

shoes, who attired the goddess in a robe of purple and put her upon my back. Then they went forth with their arms naked to their shoulders, bearing with them great swords and mighty axes and dancing like mad persons. After that we had passed many small villages, we fortuned to come to one Britunis' house, where at our first entry they began to hurl themselves hither and thither as though they were mad. They made a thousand gests with their feet and their heads. They would bite themselves. Finally every one took his weapon and wounded his arms in divers places. Amongst whom there was one more mad than the rest, that fetched many deep sighs from the bottom of his heart, as though he had been ravished in spirit, or replenished with divine power. And after that, he somewhat returning to himself invented and forged a great lie : saying that he had displeased the divine majesty of the goddess, by doing of something which was not convenable to the order of their holy religion, wherefore he would do vengeance of himself. And therewithall he took a whip and scourged his own body, that the blood issued out abundantly, which thing caused me greatly to fear to see such wounds and effusion of blood, lest the same goddess desiring so much the blood of

men should likewise desire the blood of an ass. After they were weary with hurling and beating themselves, they sat down. And behold, the inhabitants came in and offered gold, silver, vessels of wine, milk, cheese, flour, wheat, and other things; amongst whom there was one that brought barley to the ass that carried the goddess, but the greedy wretches thrust all into their sack which they brought for the purpose and put it upon my back, to the end I might serve for two purposes, that is to say for the barn by reason of my corn, and for the temple by reason of the goddess. In this sort they went from place to place, robbing all the country over.

His service with them was bad enough; but worse came when he was sold to a baker and made to grind his mill. Yet even in his misery he has a heart to pity the wretched slaves whom he saw there.

O good Lord, what a sort of poor slaves were there! Some had their skin black and blue, some had their backs striped with lashes, some were covered with ragged sacks, some wore such ragged clouts that you might perceive all their naked bodies, some were marked and burned in their heads with hot irons, some had their hair half clipped, some had locks on their legs, some very ugly and evil

favoured, that they could scarce see, their eyes and face were so black and dim with smoke, like those that fight in the sands and know not where they strike by reason of dust, and some had their faces all mealy. But how should I speak of the horses my companions, how they being old and weak, thrust their heads into the manger: they had their necks all wounded and worn away; they rated their nostrils with a continual cough, their sides were bare with the harness and great travail, their ribs were broken with beating, their hooves were battered broad with incessant labour, and their skin rugged by reason of their lankness. When I saw this dreadful sight, I began to fear, lest I should come to the like state; and considering the good fortune which I was sometime in when I was a man, I greatly lamented, holding down my head, and would eat no meat, but I saw no comfort or consolation of my evil fortune, saving that my mind was somewhat recreated to hear and understand what every man said, for they neither feared nor doubted my presence. At that time I remembered how Homer, the author of ancient poetry, described him to be a wise man which had travelled divers countries and nations, wherefore I gave great thanks to my ass for me, in that by this

means I had seen the experience of many things, and was become more wise.

Lucius was destined to become wiser yet. He was sold to a gardener, whose produce he carried to the next village.

It fortuned on a day that an honest man of the next village was benighted and constrained by reason of the rain to lodge (very lagged and weary) in our garden, where although he was but meanly received, yet it served well enough considering time and necessity. This honest man to recompence our entertainment, promised to give my master some corn, oil, and two bottles of wine; wherefore my master not delaying the matter, laded me with sacks and bottles, and rode to the town which was seven miles off. When we came to the honest man's house, he entertained and feasted my master exceedingly, and it fortuned while they ate and drank together, as sign of great amity, there chanced a strange and dreadful case; for there was a hen which ran cackling about the yard, as though she would have laid an egg. The goodman of the house, perceiving her, said: "O good and profitable pullet that feedest us every day with thy fruit, thou seemest as though thou wouldest give us some pittance for our dinner. Ho boy! put

the pannier in the corner that the hen may lay." Then the boy did as his master commanded, but the hen forsaking the pannier came towards her master, and laid at his feet not an egg which every man knoweth, but a chicken with feathers, claws and eyes, which incontinently ran peeping after his dame. By and by, happened a more strange thing which would cause any man to abhor: under the table where they sat the ground opened, and there appeared a great well and fountain of blood, insomuch that the drops thereof sprinkled about the table. At the same time while they wondered at this dreadful sight, one of the servants came running out of the cellar, and told that all the wine was boiled out of the vessels, as though there had been some great fire under. By and by a weasel was seen that drew into the house a dead serpent, and out of the mouth of a shepherd's dog leaped a live frog, and immediately after one brought word that a ram had strangled the same dog with one bite. All these things that happened astonished the goodman of the house, and the residue that were present, insomuch they could not tell what to do, or with what sacrifice to appease the anger of the gods. While every man was thus stricken in fear, behold one

brought word to the goodman of the house, that his three sons who had been brought up in good literature, and indued with good manners, were dead. For they three had great acquaintance and ancient amity with a poor man which was their neighbour and dwelled hard by them. And next unto him dwelled a young man very rich both in lands and goods, but bending from the race or his progeny's dissentions, and ruling himself in the town according to his own will. This young royster did mortally hate this poor man, insomuch that he would kill his sheep, steal his oxen, and spoil his corn and other fruits before the time of ripeness, yet was he not contented with this, but he would encroach upon the poor man's ground and claim all his heritage as his own. The poor man which was very simple and fearfull, seeing all his goods taken away by the audacity of the rich, called together and assembled many of his friends to show them the metes and bounds of his land, to the end he might have but so much ground of his father's heritage as might bury him. Amongst whom he found these three brethren as friends to help and aid him in his adversity and tribulation. Howbeit the presence of these honest citizens could in no wise persuade him to leave his

rich man)

extorted power, no nor yet to cause any temperance of his tongue: but the more they went about with gentle words to tell him his faults, the more would he fret and fume, swearing all the oaths under God, that he little regarded the presence of the whole city, whereupon incontinently he commanded his servants to take the poor man by the ears and carry him out of his ground, which greatly offended all the standers by. Then one of the brethren spake unto him somewhat boldly saying: "It is but folly to have such affiance in your riches, whereby you should use your tyranny against the poor, whenas the law is common for all men, and a redress may be had to suppress your insolence."

These words chafed him more than the burning oil, or flaming brimstone, or scourge of whips, saying that they should be all hanged and their laws too before he would be subject to any person. And therewithall he called out his bandogs, and great mastiffs, which accustomed to eat the carrion and carcasses of dead beasts in the fields and to set upon such as passed by the way; then he commanded they should be put upon all the assistance to tear them in pieces, who as soon as they heard the hiss of their master, ran fiercely upon them invading them

on every side, insomuch that the more they fled to escape away, the more cruel and terrible were the dogs. It fortuned amongst all this fearful company, that in running the youngest of the three brethren stumbled at a stone, and fell down to the ground. Then the dogs came upon him and tore him to pieces with their teeth, whereby he was compelled to cry out for succour. His other two brethren hearing his lamentable voice, ran towards him to help him, casting their cloaks about their left arms, took up stones to chase away the dogs, but all was in vain, for they might see their brother dismembered in every part of his body; who lying at the very point of death, desired his brethren to avenge his death against the cruel tyrant. And therewithall he gave up the ghost. The other two brethren perceiving so great a murder and neglecting their own lives, like desperate persons dressed themselves against the tyrant and threw a great number of stones at him; but the bloody thief, exercised to such and like mischiefs, took a spear and thrust him clean through the body. Howbeit he fell not down to the ground; for the spear that came out at his back ran into the earth and sustained him. By and by came one of this tyrant's servants, the most sturdiest of the rest,

to help his master, who at his first coming, took up a stone, and threw at the third brother, but by reason the stone ran along his arm it did not hurt him, which chanced otherwise than all men's expectation was. By and by the young man feigning that his arm was greatly wounded, spake these words unto the cruel bloodsucker: "Now mayest thou, thou wretch, triumph upon the destruction of all our family, now hast thou fed up thy insatiable cruelty with the blood of three brethren, now mayst thou rejoice at the fall of us citizens, yet think not but that how far soever thou dost remove and extend the bounds of thy land, thou shalt have some neighbour; but how greatly am I sorry that I have lost mine arm wherewithall I minded to cut off thy head." When he had spoken these words, the furious thief drew out his dagger, and running upon the young man thought verily to have slain him, but it chanced otherwise, for the young man resisted him stoutly, and in buckling together by violence wrested the dagger out of his hand: which done, he killed the rich thief with his own weapon, and to the intent the young man would escape the hands of the servants, which came running to assist their master, with the same dagger he cut his own throat. These

things were signified by the strange and dreadful wonders which fortuned in the house of the good man: who after he had heard these sorrowfull tidings could in no wise weep, so far was he stricken with dolor, but presently taking his knife wherewith he cut his cheese and other meat before, he cut his own throat likewise, in such sort that he fell upon the board and embrued the table with the streams of his blood in most miserable manner. Hereby was my master the gardener deprived of his hope, and paying for his dinner the watery tears of his eyes, mounted upon my back, and so we went homeward the same way as we came.

Lucius' next owner was a soldier, and after him two brothers, a baker and a cook; where he fared well, for he used to eat their dainty viands when they went out, and found them much more to his taste than hay. The brothers, constantly missing the food, began to accuse each other of theft, but finally, by watching through a hole, espied their Ass at meat, which made them laugh exceedingly; after which they would feed him with fine food for sport, and wine too; they instructed him how to sit properly at table with them, and were surprised at his intelligence. Finally, after many adventures, the Ass was led forth to take part in a religious pomp.

When the day of triumph came, I was led with great pomp and magnificence to the appointed place:

whither when I was brought, I first saw the preamble of the triumph, dedicated with dancers and merry taunting jests, and I in the mean season was placed before the gate of the theatre, whereas on the one side I saw the green and fresh grass growing before the entry thereof, whereon I greatly desired to feed. On the other side I conceived a great delectation to see, when the theatre gates were opened, how all things was finely prepared and set forth. For there I might see young children and maidens in the flower of their youth, of excellent beauty, and attired gorgeously, dancing and moving in comely order, according to the order of Grecia: for sometimes they would dance in length, sometimes round together, sometimes divide themselves in four parts, and sometimes loose hands on every side. But when the trumpet gave warning that every man should retire to his place, then began the triumph to appear. First there was a hill of wood, not much unlike that which the poet Homer called Ida, for it was garnished about with all sorts of green verdure and lively trees, from the top whereof ran down a clear and fresh fountain, nourishing the waters below; about which wood were many young and tender goats plucking and feeding daintily on

the budding trees. Then came a young man, a shepherd representing Paris, richly arrayed with vestments of Barbary, having a mitre of gold upon his head, and seeming as though he kept the goats. After him ensued another young man all naked, saving that his left shoulder was covered with a rich cloak, and his head shining with glittering hair, and hanging down, through which you might perceive two little wings, whereby you might conjecture that he was Mercury with his rod called Caduceus. He bare in his right hand an apple of gold, and with a seemly gait went towards him that represented Paris, and after that he had delivered him the apple, he made a sign that Jupiter had commanded him so to do; when he had done his message, he departed away. And by and by there approached a fair and comely maiden, not much unlike Juno, for she had a diadem of gold upon her head, and in her hand she bare a regal sceptre; then followed another resembling Pallas, for she had on her head a shining sallet, whereon was bound a garland of olive branches, having in one hand a target or shield, and in the other a spear as though she would fight; then came another which passed the other in beauty, and represented the goddess Venus, with the colour of

Ambrosia, when she was a maiden; and to the end she would show her perfect beauty, she appeared all naked, saving that her fine and dainty skin was covered with a thin smock, which the wind blew hither and thither to testify the youth and flower of the age of the dame; her colour was of two sorts, for her body was white as descended from heaven, and her smock was bluish as arrived from the sea. After every one of the virgins, which seemed goddesses, followed certain waiting-servants: Castor and Pollux went behind Juno, having on their heads helmets covered with stars. This virgin Juno sounded a flute, which she bare in her hand, and moved herself towards the shepherd Paris, showing by honest signs and tokens that he should be lord of all Asia if he would judge her the fairest of the three, and to give her the apple of gold. The other maiden, which seemed by her armour to be Pallas, was accompanied by two young men, armed and brandishing their naked swords in their hands, whereof one was named Terror, and the other Fear; behind them approached one sounding his trumpet to provoke and stir men to battle. This maiden began to dance and shake her head, throwing her fierce and terrible eyes upon Paris, and promising that if it

pleased him to give her the victory of beauty, she would make him the most strong and vigorous man alive. Then came Venus and presented herself in the middle of the theatre, with much favour of all the people, for she was accompanied with a great number of youth, whereby you would have judged them to be all Cupids, either to have flown from heaven, or else from the river of the sea; for they had wings, arrows and the residue of their habit according to each point, and they bare in their hands torches lighted, as though it had been a day of marriage. Then came a great multitude of fair maidens: On the one side were the most comely Graces; on the other side the most beautiful Hours, carrying garlands and loose flowers, and making great honour to the Goddess of pleasure. The lutes and pipes yielded out the sweet sound of Lydians, whereby they pleased the minds of the standers by exceedingly, but the more pleasing Venus moved forward more and more, and shaking her head, answered by her motion and gesture, to the sound of the instruments. For sometimes she would wink gently, sometimes threaten and look aspersly, and sometimes dance only with her eyes. As soon as she was come before the Judge, she made a sign and

token to give him the most fairest spouse of all the world, if he would prefer her above the residue of the Goddesses; then the young Phrygian shepherd Paris, with a willing mind delivered the golden apple to Venus, which was the victory of beauty. Why do ye marvel, ye orators, ye lawyers, and advocates, if many of our judges nowadays sell their judgements for money, whenas in the beginning of the world, one only Grace corrupted the sentence between God and men, and that one rustical judge and shepherd, appointed by the counsell of the great Jupiter, sold his judgement for a little pleasure, which was the cause afterwards of the ruin of all his progeny? By like manner of mean was sentence given between the noble Greeks. For the noble and valiant personage Palamedes was convicted and attainted of treason, by false persuasion and accusation, and Ulysses being but of base condition was preferred in martial prowess above great Ajax; what judgement was there likewise amongst the Athenian lawyers, sage and expert in all sciences? was not Socrates, who was preferred by the God Apollo above all the wise men of the world, by envy and malice of wicked persons, poisoned with the herb cicuta, as one that corrupted the youth of the

country, whom always he kept under by correction? For we see nowadays many excellent philosophers greatly desire to follow his feet, and by perpetual study to volve and revolve his works; but to the end I may not be reproved of indignation by any that might say, "What, shall we suffer an ass to play the philosopher!" I will return to my former purpose.

In the midst of this, Lucius ran away, and waking up in the morning, he prayed to Ceres, who appeared to him in a dream, and promised him deliverance.

Soon after the darkness chased away, and the clear and golden sun arose, whenas, behold, I saw the streets replenished with people in a religious sort, and in great triumph. All things seemed that day to be joyfull, as well all manner of beasts and the very houses, as also the very day itself seemed to rejoice. For after the hoarfrost ensued the hot and temperate sun; whereby the little birds weening that the springtime had come did chirp and sing in their steven melodiously the mother of stars, the parent of times and mistress of all the world. The fruitfull trees rejoiced at their fertility. The barren and sterile were contented at their shadow rendering sweet and pleasant thrills. The seas were quiet from winds and tempests. The heaven had chased away

Naval sacrifice to Isis at Corinth.

the clouds, and appeared fair and clear with his proper light. Behold then, more and more appeared the pomps and processions, attired in regal manner, and singing joyfully. One was girded about the middle like a man of arms; another bare a spear, and had a cloak and high shoes as a hunter; another was attired in a robe of silk, and socks of gold, having his hair laid out and dressed in form of a woman. There was another which wore leg-harness and bare a target, a sallet, and a spear, like a martial soldier. After him marched one attired in purple, with vergers before him like a magistrate. After him followeth one with a mantle, a staff, a pair of pantofles and with a gray beard, signifying a philosopher. After him went one with lime, betokening a fowler, another with hooks declaring a fisher. I saw there a meek and tame bear, which in matron habit was carried on a stool: An ape with a bonnet on his head, and covered with lawn, resembling a shepherd, and bearing a cup of gold in his hand: An ass which had wings glued to his back, and went after an old man, whereby you would judge the one to be Pegasus, and the other Bellerophon. Amongst these pleasures and popular delectations, which wandered hither and thither, you might see the

pomp of the Goddess triumphantly march forward: the women attired in white vestments, and rejoicing in that they bare garlands and flowers upon their heads, bespread the way with herbs, which they bare in their aprons where this regal and devout procession should pass. Others carried glasses on their backs, to testify obeisance and honour to the Goddess which came after. Others bare combs of ivory, and declared by their gestures and motions of their arms, that they were ordained and ready to dress the Goddess. Others dropped in the ways, as they went, balm and other precious ointments. Then came a great number, as well of men as of women, with candles, torches, and other lights, doing honour to the celestial goddess. After that sounded the musical harmony of instruments. Then came a fair company of youth, apparelled in white vestments, singing both metre and verse with a comely grace, which some studious poet had made in honour of the Muses. In the mean season, arrived the blowers of trumpets which were dedicate unto Serapis, and to the temple before them were officers and beadles preparing room for the goddess to pass. Then came the great company of men and women, which had taken divine orders, whose garments glistened all the streets over. The

women had their hair anointed, and their heads covered with linen; but the men had their crowns shaven, which were the terrene stars of the goddess, holding in their hands instruments of brass, silver, and gold, which rendered a pleasant sound. The principal priests, which were apparelled in white surplices hanging down to the ground, bare the relics of the puissant goddess. One carried a light, not unlike those which we used in our houses, saving that in the middle thereof appeared a bole which rendered a more bright flame. The second attired like the other, bare in his hands an altar, which the goddess herself named the succour of nations. The third held up a tree of palm, with leaves of gold, and the verge of Mercury. The fourth held out a token of equity by his left hand, which was deformed in every place, signifying thereby more equity than by the right hand. The same priest carried a round vessell of gold, in form of a cap. The fifth bare a van wrought with springs of gold, and another carried a vessel for wine. By and by after, the goddess followed afoot as men do, and especially Mercury, the messenger of the gods infernal and supernal, with his face sometimes black, sometimes fair, lifting up the head of the dog Anubis,

and bearing in his left hand his verge, and in his right hand the branch of a palm-tree, after whom followed a cow with an upright gait, representing the figure of the great goddess, and he that guided her marched on with much gravity. And other carried the secrets of their religion closed in a coffer. There was one that bare on his stomach the figure of his god, not formed like any beast, bird, savage thing or human shape, but made by a new invention, whereby was signified that such a religion should not be discovered, or revealed to any person. There was a vessel wrought with a round bottom, having on the one side pictures figured like unto the manner of the Egyptians, and on the other side was an ear, whereupon stood the serpent Aspis, holding out his scaly neck. Finally came he which was appointed to my good fortune, according to the promise of the goddess. For the great priest which bare the restoration of my human shape, by the commandment of the goddess, approached more and more, bearing in his left hand the timbrell, and in the other a garland of roses to give me, to the end I might be delivered from cruel fortune, which was always mine enemy, after the sufferance of so much calamity and

pain, and after the endurance of so many perils. Then I not running hastily, by reason of sudden joy, lest I should disturb the quiet procession with mine importunity, but going softly through the press of people, which gave me place on every side, went after the priest. The priest being admonished the night before as I might well perceive, stood still, and holding out his hand, thrust out the garland of roses into my mouth, which I (trembling) devoured with a great affection, and as soon as I had eaten them I was not deceived of the promise made unto me. For my deformed and assy face abated, and first the rugged hair of my body fell off, my thick skin waxed soft and tender, the hoofs of my feet changed into toes, my hands returned again, my neck grew short, my head and mouth became round, my long ears were made little, my great and stony teeth waxed less, like the teeth of men, and my tail which cumbered me most, appeared nowhere. The people began to marvel, and the religious honoured the goddess for so evident a miracle; they wondered at the visions which they saw in the night and the facility of my reformation, whereby they rendered testimony of so great a benefit which I received of the goddess. When I

saw myself in such estate, I stood still a good space and said nothing, for I could not tell what to say, nor what word I should first speak, nor what thanks I should render to the goddess; but the great priest understanding all my fortune and misery by divine advertisement commanded that one should give me garments to cover me. Then one of the company put off his upper robe, and put it on my back, which done the priest looking upon me with a sweet and benign voice, gan say in this sort: "O my friend Lucius, after the endurance of so many labours, and the endurance of so many tempests of fortune, thou art now at length come to the port and haven of rest and mercy. Neither did thy noble lineage, thy dignity, neither thy doctrine anything prevail, but that thou hast endured so many servile pleasures, by a little folly of thy youthfulness, whereby thou hast had a sinister reward of thy unprosperous curiosity; but howsoever the blindness of Fortune tormented thee in divers dangers, so it is that now unawares to her thou art come to this present felicity. Let Fortune go, and fume in another place, let her find some other matter to execute her cruelty, for Fortune hath no puissance against them which serve and honour

our goddess. For what availed the thieves, the beasts savage, thy great servitude, the ill and dangerous ways, the long passages, the fear of death every day? Know thou that now thou art safe, and under the protection of her, who by her clear light doth lighten the other gods; wherefore rejoice, and take a convenable countenance to thy white habit, follow the pomp of this devout and honourable procession, to the end that such as be not devout to the goddess may see and acknowledge their error. Behold, Lucius, thou art delivered from so great miseries by the providence of the goddess Isis, rejoice therefore and triumph of the victory of Fortune. To the end thou maist live more safe and sure, make thyself one of this holy order, dedicate thy mind to the obsequy of our religion, and take upon thee a voluntary yoke of ministery, and when thou beginnest to serve and honour the goddess, then shalt thou feel the fruit of thy liberty." After that the great priest had prophesied in this manner, with often breathings, he made a conclusion of his words; then I went amongst the company of the rest and followed the procession. Every one of the people knew me, and pointing at me with their fingers said in this sort: "Behold him who

is this day transformed into a man by the puissance of the soveraigne goddess: verily he is blessed and most blessed that hath merited so great grace from heaven, as by the innocency of his former life, and as it were by a new regeneration is reserved to the obsequy of the goddess." In the mean season by little and little we approached nigh unto the sea coast, even to that place where I lay the night before being an ass.

Thereafter the images and relics were orderly disposed; the great priest compassed about with divers pictures according to the fashion of the Egyptians, did dedicate and consecrate with certain prayers a fair ship made very cunningly, and purified the same with a torch, an egg and sulphur. The sail was of white linen cloth, whereon was written certain letters, which testified the navigation to be prosperous; the mast was of great length made of a pine-tree, round and very excellent, with a shining top; the cabin was covered over with coverings of gold, and all the ship was made of citron-tree very fair. Then all the people as well religious as profane took a great number of vans replenished with odours and pleasant smells, and threw them into the sea mingled with milk, until the ship was filled up

with large gifts and prosperous devotions, whenas with a pleasant mind it launched out into the deep; but when they had lost sight of the ship, every man carried again that which he brought, and went toward the Temple in like pomp and order as they came to the seaside. When we were come to the Temple, the great priest and those which were deputed to carry the divine figures, but specially those which had long time been worshippers of the religion, went into the secret chamber of the Goddess, where they put and placed the images according to their order. This done, one of the company which was scribe or interpreter of letters, who in form of a preacher stood up in a chair before the place of the holy college, and began to read out of a book, and to interpret to the great Prince, the Senate, and to all the noble order of Chivalry, and generally to all the Roman people, and to all such as be under the puissance and jurisdiction of Rome, these words following λαοῖς ἄφεσις, which signified the end of their divine service, and that it was lawfull for every man to depart: whereat all the people gave a great shout, and replenished with joy, bare all kinds of herbs and garlands of flowers home to their houses, kissing and embracing the steps where the Goddess

passed. Howbeit I could not do as the rest, for my mind would not suffer me to depart one foot away, so earnest and attentive was I to behold the beauty of the Goddess, with remembrance likewise of my great travail and misery which I had endured.

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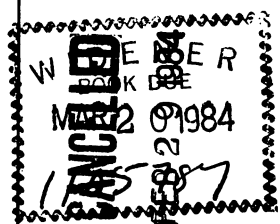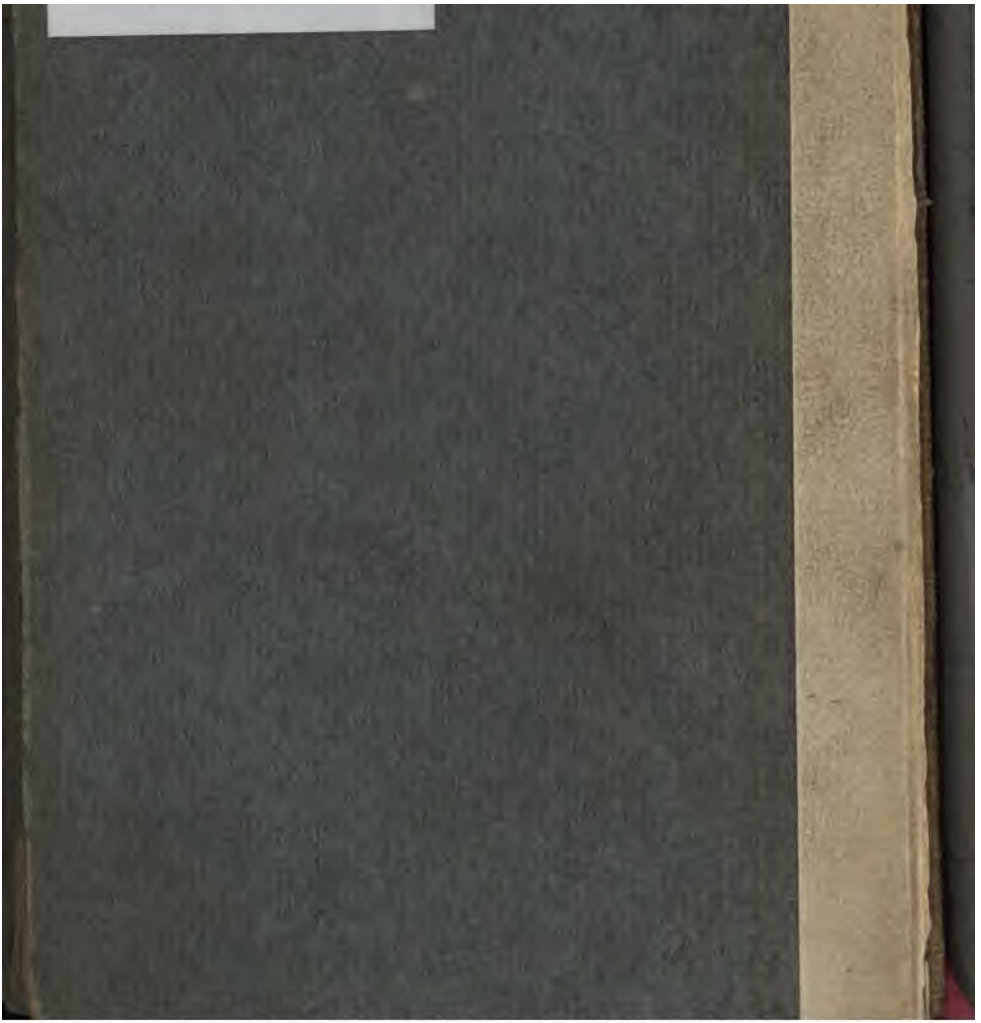
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